DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS. CONFIDENTIAL

INWARD SAVINGRAM.

I.7571/2

MIN. DEPT. E.A.
MIN. DEPT. DEFENCE
MIN. DEPT. TRADE (C-M)
MIN. DEPT. PRIMARY INDUSTRY (C)
TREASURER & TREASURY
P.M's. DEPT
P.M's.

12th May, 1958.

CONFIDENTIAL

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS. CONFIDENTIAL

INWARD SAVINGRAM.

58/5474

1 9 MAY 1958

I.7571/2

Dated: 5th May, 1958.

:HB

Rec'd: 11th May, 1958.

FROM:

(via leased channel)

Australian Embassy,
WASHINGTON.

Savingram 405. CONFIDENTIAL

Information copies to London and Ottawa.

Lebanon.

The following from Bergus (Israel-Lebanon Affairs) on 9th May.

Internal Situation.

2. The situation in Lebanon was quiet. President Chamoun had not yet decided whether to seek amendment of the Constitution to permit him to seek re-election. If he did decide that he should run for Presidency again there would be trouble. Despite this, Bergus believed that it was in the interests of the West that Chamoun should seek re-election.

United States Aid.

3. Malik (Lebanon Foreign Minister) had approached the United States for 15 million dollars of immediate grant aid. He had been told this was impossible but was offered 12 million dollars from the Development Loan fund, some title II PL480 and some military hardware (e.g. tanks, etc). The Lebanese did not like the idea of a loan but would probably accept it.

4. Malik had also canvassed the possibility of the United States providing Lebanon with 125 million dollars over a six year period for economic development purposes. The United States had explained that this was also impossible as the United States Government would not commit itself to providing fixed installments of aid over any period of years. The point had also been made that if Labanon had a proper development plan it would be easier in any particular year (as in the case of India) to provide support for economic development. The Lebanese had then come up with a plan which amounted to no more than a note from the Foreign Ministry saying it was planned to spend, for example, 40 million dollars on shipping and 50 million dollars on citrus, during the next six years. It had been explained to them that this was not sufficient as economic development plan.

CONFIDENTIAL

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM. CONFIDENTIAL

3

2. I.7633/4

Christian shopkeepers, no doubt fearing reprisal from Muslim mobs, had all closed their doors.

MIN. & DEPT. E.A.
MIN. & DEPT. DEFENCE
P.M'S,

13th May, 1958

CONFIDENTIAL

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

CONFIDENTIAL

I.7633/4

Sent: 12th May, 1958
1920
Rec'd: 13th May, 1958
1354

Transmitted via leased channel

BD

FROM:

Australian Embassy,
WASHINGTON.

667. CONFIDENTIAL.

Information copies to London and Ottawa.

Lebanon.

Following from Wahl (Israel-Lebanon Affairs) on 12th May.

2. The State Department was very concerned about developments in Lebanon over the last 24 hours. Following riots in Tripoli and the burning of the U.S.I.A. library there by Muslims over the weekend, rioting had broken out in Beirut today. (U.S.I.A. reading room in Muslim section of Beirut had been set on fire). Troops had intervened and order was being restored, but the situation was still very tense. The Lebanese Parliament would declare martial law throughout the country when it met tomorrow. A curfew was already being imposed on Beirut. The United States Embassy had advised all American citizens to stay off the streets for the time being.

3. The Lebanese Government was in close consultation with the United States Embassy about the situation. The Government was gravely concerned with broadcasts from Damascus and Cairo which were virtually inciting the overthrow of the Government. The Lebanese authorities were also worried about report (as yet unconfirmed) that armed Druse tribesmen were crossing into Lebanon from Syria. There was a further report that the I.P.C. pipeline had been cut and extensively damaged in remote area. Wahl said this report came from radio broadcast which quoted the I.P.C. Beirut office as source.

4. Wahl commented that tension had been developing for a long time over the possibility that President Chamoun would seek amendment of the constituion to stand for re-election. Rumours had been prevalent late last week that the Government would move to amend the Constitution before the present session of the Lebanese Parliament ended later this month. There was indications that the opposition had, in fact, been planning demonstrations against such a move. The as yet, unexplained murder of a prominent Muslim newspaper editor who was an outspoken critic of the Government, had precipitated the present situation. The Opposition had seized on this as a convenient pretext to organise demonstrations against the Government which had developed into riots. The situation was extremely fluid at the present time and much would depend on what happened in other areas. Developments in Parliament in the next few days would also be important. Wahl expected that if the opposition maintained its demand for the resignation of the present Government there might be further trouble. The Army was doing its best and had so far remained completely loyal to the Government.

5. Wahl commented that the general strike called in Beirut by the Opposition over the weekend had been a 100% success. The Lebanese

CONFIDENTIAL

SECRET 5

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

I. 7679

GUARD

responsibility for external assistance to the Lebanese Government lay with the United States. If the United States was not seen to be taking the initiative possibly of intervention by Iraq (together with Jordan) could not be ruled out. King Hussein was due in Iraq tomorrow ostensibly to discuss arrangements for union, but the situation in Lebanon might prove the main topic for consideration.

MIN. & DEPT. E.A.
MIN. & DEPT. DEFENCE
P.M.'s

14th May, 1958.

SECRET

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS. SECRET

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

GUARD

HP:SS

I. 7679

Dated: 13th May, 1958
2155

FROM:

Rec'd: 14th May, 1958
1045

Australian High Commission,
L O N D O N.

1 5 MAY 1958

1265. SECRET & GUARD.

Repeated Washington 72.

From External.

Lebanon.

Foreign Office today expressed concern about the gravity of the situation. The North was completely out of Government control and riots had spread to Beirut. I.P.C. Pipeline in Lebanon had been blown up. Disorders had gone on for some time as a result of Chamoun's desire to stand for second term as President but immediate increase in rioting had been caused by recent assassination of Opposition newspaper editor. Disorders showed every sign of being carefully stage-managed by U.A.R. and the Government was unable to stop the flow of arms and men across the border from Syria.

2. Chamoun who had still not made known whether his final decision was to stand for second term could not control the situation. United Kingdom impression was that the Army under General Chahab had not thrown full weight into suppressing the disorders but that if it did there was a possibility that the situation could be retrieved. Chehab was now known not to favour Chamoun's standing again and his attitude towards use of the Army was in part explained by his wish to keep clear of political entanglements for the moment.

3. Within the last day or so the Lebanese Government had appealed to the United States and United Kingdom (possibly also to others) for help. At the end of 1957 and the beginning of 1958 there had been exchanges of view between the United Kingdom and the United States on possible political developments in Lebanon which had included discussion of what action the United States and United Kingdom should take and what forces would be available in the event of deterioration in public order leading to a serious threat to the present Regime. But the exchange of views had petered out and the United Kingdom had heard nothing recently from the United States although we understand that in a private conversation at the N.A.T.O. meeting in Copenhagen Dulles expressed to Lloyd concern at the situation. The Foreign Office had heard from the Lebanese that as a result of their recent appeal the United States had undertaken to land troops if the Lebanese Government asked for them. The Foreign Office did not know what the United Kingdom would do in response to Lebanese appeal which would go to Cabinet.

4. The Foreign Office considered that the prime

SECRET

/2........

7

CONFIDENTIAL

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

SHA:ABK. I.7731.

Dated: 13th May, 1958.
1935.

FROM: Rec'd: 14th May, 1958.
1427.

Australian Embassy, (Transmitted via leased channel)
WASHINGTON.

15 MAY 1958 P.M.'S DEPARTMENT SECRETARIAT 56/1598 58/5474

679. CONFIDENTIAL.

(Information copies to London and Ottawa)

Lebanon

The following from Wahl (Israel-Lebanon Affairs) on 13th May.

1. Widespread disturbances had broken communications and it was difficult to find out what was happening in many parts of the country. The Army appeared to be retaining the upper hand in the main cities but even in Beirut shooting was still going on in the Moslem quarter. Nevertheless, the United States Embassy reported that the situation in the city appeared to be improving this afternoon (Beirut time). The situation in North Lebanon appeared to be worst in the country. Damascus Radio was claiming that this region wished to join the U.A.R.

2. The mob had attempted to attack the United States Embassy earlier today and it had come within few hundred yards before it was stopped by Lebanese Army units. So far no Americans had been hurt.

3. Malik (Lebanon Foreign Minister) told a press conference today that the Lebanese Government would lodge a formal protest with the U.A.R. regarding its intervention. Also that the Lebanese Government was considering the possibility of going to the United Nations.

4. The State Department was very worried by evidence of outside intervention and consideration was being given at high level as to what the United States might do. However, Wahl did not yet know whether the point had been reached where the United States could do anything. Active consideration had been given to the possibility of going to the Security Council but the United States waswaiting on the Lebanese Governmen t decision. Wahl indicated that the State Department also had doubts as to how useful Security Council action would be at this point.

5. Wahl confirmed that the I.P.C. pipeline had been cut but said that the Company had been able to divert the flow of oil to Baniyas and no serious repercussions were expected.

MIN. & DEPT. E.A.
MIN. & DEPT. DEFENCE.
P.M.'S. 14th May, 1958.

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS RESTRICTED

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

8

56/1598
16 MAY 1958
58/5474

HB

I.7737

Dated: 14th May, 1958.
1525
Rec'd: 15th May, 1958.
0830

FROM:

Australian Embassy,
TOKYO.

140 RESTRICTED.

The Minister of Lebanon has suddenly cancelled today's reception for the Secretary-General of Arab League now in Tokyo. I had earlier refused invitation.

Watt.

MIN. DEPT. E.A.
P.M's.

15th May, 1958.

9

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS. CONFIDENTIAL

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

DBB:ABK. I.7741.

Dated: 14th May, 1958.
1910.

FROM: Rec'd: 15th May, 1 958.
0830.

56/1598
16 MAY 1958
58/5474

Australian Legation,
TEL AVIV.

33. CONFIDENTIAL.

I discussed Lebanon today with Yuval. He said that current happenings there were not so far giving Israel concern for its security. They were taking place rather in the north of the main Israel-Lebanon border (see London savingram 209 of 20th March). Isreal of course appears to view with alarm Ø the rapid improvement of Nasser's position.

Ballard.

(Ø Corrupt Group)

MIN. & DEPT. E.A.
MIN. & DEPT. DEFENCE.
P.M.'S. 15th May, 1958.

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS. CONFIDENTIAL

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

I.1780/1/2

visiting Spanish ports and that to his knowledge no orders had yet been given to cut short this visit. There were at present only two or three United States naval units in the East Mediterranean.

7. The only action so far taken by the United States Government regarding the present situation in Lebanon was the decision to speed up the delivery of equipment already ordered for the Lebanese Police and some items of military equipment on order for the Lebanese Army. However it would be several weeks before this equipment was delivered.

8. Analogy was being drawn in many quarters with the situation in Jordan last year when the United States acted quickly to bolster the position of the Jordan Government against U.A.R. pressures. The present situation in Lebanon was different. Disorders arose from an internal issue and while the United States was committed to act to maintain the 'independence and integrity' of Lebanon, it could hardly act merely to keep the Chamoun Regime in office. The U.A.R. was seeking to capitalise on the situation in Lebanon but its physical intervention had sofar been limited to an infiltration of a few armed bands across the Syrian border and on the coast from the Gaza Strip. The United States Embassy's view was that inflammatory broadcasts from Damascus and Cairo were, in fact, much more serious in their effects than the intervention of armed bands. The possibility of United Nations action was still being kept in mind but evidence of physical intervention by the U.A.R. was so far insufficient to make much of a case in the Security Council. Also United Nations action would involve all sorts of complications for the Lebanese and they were reluctant to adopt this course at this stage.

MIN. & DEPT. E.A.
MIN. & DEPT. DEFENCE
P.M'S

15th May, 1958.

CONFIDENTIAL

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

SHA:CM

I.1780/1/2

58/5474

16 MAY 1958

Dated: 14th May, 1958.
2020
Rec'd: 15th May, 1958.

(Transmitted via leased channel)

FROM:

Australian Embassy,
WASHINGTON.

690. CONFIDENTIAL IMMEDIATE.

Repeated London 45, U.N.New York (information copy to Ottawa).

Lebanon.

The following from Wahl (Israel-Lebanon Affairs) on 14th May.

2. Latest reports from Lebanon gave some grounds for hope that the situation was improving but the Lebanese Army had so far been able to do little more than contain disorder in the main cities, e.g. Beirut, Tripoli and Sidon, where it was concentrating its efforts. The Army was active on the coastand on the main road to Damascus but so far it had not been able to exercise any control at all in a large area of North Lebanon and around Bisherri (where the President's summer palace was situated).

3. The Chahab family which held many key posts (including the Chief of Staff position) in the Army had been opposed to President Chamoun standing for a second term but there was no evidence to suggest that the Army was not doing its best within its capabilities to put down the disorders. Wahl commented that the State Department at the present time was waiting on a report from the United States Embassy, Beirut on the Army's capability.

4. A report was circulating that the Army Chief of Staff (General Chahab) had called upon President Chamoun to resign as a first step towards restoration of order but so far as the State Department knew there was no substance to this report.

5. Wahl denied that the Lebanese Government had yet made any appeal for help to the United States. However Chamoun had on two or three occasions in last few days reminded the three Western Ambassadors (United States, United Kingdom and France) of previous Western assurances. In the case of the United States the most recent assurance had been in a letter which Dulles had written to Malik while the latter was in the United States for the last session of the United Nations General Assembly in which the Secretary had assured the Lebanese Government of United States support to ensure the 'integrity and independence' of Lebanon.

6. Wahl also denied a news report that the United States Sixth Fleet was being concentrated in the East Mediterranean. He said the greater part of the Sixth Fleet was at present

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

TWWP:CM

I.7811

56/1598
16 MAY 1958
P.M.'S DEPARTMENT SECRET REGISTRY
58/5474

Dated: 14th May, 1958.
1755

Rec'd: 15th May, 1958.
2200

(Transmitted via leased channel)

FROM:

Australian Mission to United Nations,
NEW YORK.

NY323. CONFIDENTIAL.

Repeated Washington for information.

From Walker.

Dixon told me that the United States, United Kingdom and France having been consulted by the Lebanese Government, had recommended that they appeal to the security council against the U.A.R. on the pattern of the recent Sudanese complaint, Dixon remarked that domestic pressures in Lebanon might prevent such action being taken.

2. The United States Delegation told us there seems to be sufficient evidence for Lebanon to make prima facie case against U.A.R. for support to insurgents.

MIN. & DEPT. E.A.
P.M'S

16th May, 1958.

13

CONFIDENTIAL

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

58/5474

20 MAY 1958

TWWP:SS

I. 7313

Dated: 14th May, 1958

FROM:

Rec'd: 15th May, 1958
1949

Australian Embassy,
W A S H I N G T O N.

(Via leased channel).

693. CONFIDENTIAL - PRIORITY.

(Information copy London).

Algeria.

Looram (French Affairs) said today that the State Department was unable to throw much light on the Algerian developments but was watching the situation closely. The latest information was that Salan had made his first report to Paris and that Massu had declared that it was not the objective of the committee of public safety to break with France but simply to ensure law and order in Algeria. During the brief conversation Looram made following comments:-

(a) It was not clear to what extent Massu was supported by the military, but widespread support "for a mere Brigadier General" seemed doubtful, despite his acknowledged popularity in Algiers. The main support at the present seemed to be from the "Colonels".

(b) Salan's position also was not clear. He might be in league with Massu or he might be taking a temporary back seat to see which way events would develop.

(c) If Pflimlin could obtain the support of the Socialists and Independents, and thus of all the Democratic Parties, his internal position would be immeasurably improved, and he would theoretically be in position to take steps against Massu. But what his Algerian policy would be in this event was anyones guess. However if Pflimlin could not broaden the basis of his support it was difficult to see how he could last, and if at the same time Massu consolidated his position in Algeria, Coty would presumably have no alternative but to turn to De Gaulle.

(d) The Tunisians were extremely concerned, particularly with the possibility that French troops in Tunisia might get out of hand.

MIN. & DEPT E.A.
MIN. & DEPT. DEFENCE
P.M.'s

16th May, 1958.

SECRET

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS.

To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA.

Despatched:

Received:

4. To Ottawa, Canberra, Wellington, Pretoria and Salisbury. Please inform Commonwealth/Federal authorities. High Commissioners in London informed.

5. To Karachi. Please inform Pakistan authorities omitting last sentence of paragraph 3. Pakistan High Commissioner in London informed.

6. To Delhi, Colombo, Accra, Kuala Lumpur. You have discretion to inform Commonwealth authorities omitting last sentence of paragraph 3.

<u>SECRETARY OF STATE</u>.

SECRET

SECRET 'S'

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS.

To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA.

Despatched: 22.30 hours 13th May, 1958.

Received: 11.30 hours 14th May, 1958.

TELEGRAM CIRCULAR W. NO. 323. SECRET.

LEBANON.

Assassination on May 8th of Nasib Matni, publisher and editor of left-wing "Daily Telegraph" and avowed opponent of President Chamoun and Lebanese Government, has been made the occasion for inflamatory statements by Opposition leaders and for strikes, rioting and sabotage. In Tripoli where situation was most serious, 16 people were reported killed and 122 wounded. Trouble later spread to other areas including Beirut where there have been riots and strikes. I.P.C. pipeline is reported to have been blown up in mountainous country near the Syrian frontier.

2. On May 10th Opposition leaders presented demand that President, Prime Minister and Foreign Minister should immediately resign suggesting that they would accept General Chehab as Prime Minister pending new elections. President Chamoun rejected this proposal and declared his firm intention to maintain law and order and to remain in office.

3. It is evident that Opposition elements in Lebanon are being aided and abetted in their present activities by U.A.R. from across frontier. Although they have considerable capacity for causing trouble especially in predominantly Moslem areas such as Tripoli it seems probable that so long as Army under General Chehab remains loyal to President, Chamoun will be able to ride out storm. Danger is that Chehab who is reported to be vacillating, and who is believed to oppose President's plans to stand for re-election, may fail to provide firm leadership which Army needs if it is to maintain order.

/4.

SECRET

Copy: DEF. - info. 16/5/58

Ref: POL.250/1. SECRET

58/5474

16 MAY 1958

P.M.'s DEPARTMENT SECRET REGISTRY

G. Unkles, Esq.,
Prime Minister's Department,
CANBERRA. A.C.T.

With the Compliments

of the

Official Secretary

Two copies of telegram W No.323
from Commonwealth Relations Office
ref. 'LEBANON'.

SECRET

Secretary 16/5

Mr

Office of the High Commissioner
for the United Kingdom,
Canberra, A.C.T.

15th May, 1958.

Copy Defence 16 MAY 1958

16

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS. SECRET

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

SDP:HP

I. 7846

FROM:

Dated: 15th May, 1958.
2050
Rec'd: 16th May, 1958.
0905

Australian High Commission,
LONDON.

58/5474

19 MAY 1958

P.M.'s DEPARTMENT SECRET REGISTRY

1289. SECRET.

Repeated Washington 79.

From External.

Lebanon.

The Foreign Office inform us that today's reports from Beirut indicate greater confidence on the part of Chamoun and Chehab (who we understand is now being more active in Government's support) and that both seem to feel they can control the situation. Chamoun has not reverted to requests for help. Various country districts are in Dissident hands and infiltrations are continuing along the Syrian border but the Government seems to have control of the towns.

2. The I.P.C. pipe-line has been repaired and oil is flowing through again.

3. Understand a personal telegram on Lebanon was sent by Mr. Macmillan to Mr. Menzies last night.

Min. & Dept. External Affairs.
" " " Defence.
P.M.'s.

16th May, 1958.

CONFIDENTIAL 17

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

-2- I.7887/8

Min. & Dept. External Affairs.
" " " Defence.
P.M.'s.

17th May, 1958.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL 18

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

SA:HP

I.7887/8

FROM:

Dated: 15th May, 1958.
2000
Rec'd: 16th May, 1958.
1640
(Via leased channel)

Australian Embassy,
WASHINGTON.

58/5474
20 MAY 1958
P.M.'S. DEPARTMENT SECRET REGISTRY

708. CONFIDENTIAL.

Repeated to Australian Mission New York (information copies to London and Ottawa).

Lebanon. Our 690.

The following from Dorman (Deputy Director, Near East Affairs) on 15th May.

2. The United States was avoiding as far as possible the issuance of public statements expressing United States support for the Lebanese Government. Everybody knew that the present Lebanese Government was pro-Western and that the United States wished to see them remain in office. The State Department felt that a public statement at this time would only serve to embarrass the Lebanese Government and strengthen opposition groups. The United States Ambassador at Beirut (McClintock) had, however, made it clear to the press that the United States was determined to help the Lebanese Government to preserve internal security.

3. Dorman confirmed that the United States was expediting delivery of some equipment to the police and Army in Lebanon, some of which would be delivered by airfreight. However, the bulk would be delivered in the normal way and it would be several weeks before it arrived.

4. Dorman commented that the United States had to proceed cautiously in giving help to the Lebanese Government to avoid an impression of interfering in Lebanese internal affairs. The State Department felt that evidence of U.A.R. intervention was too insubstantial to make much of a case that the U.A.R. Government was physically intervening in Lebanon disorders.

5. The State Department, as with the Lebanese Government itself, had doubts about the usefulness of lodging a complaint against the U.A.R. in the Security Council, but if the Lebanese decided to proceed they would receive the full support of the United States.

6. Movements of units of the Sixth Fleet from the Eastern to the Central Mediterranean, which received wide publicity in the press here today, were unrelated to the situation in Lebanon. These units had been scheduled for some time past to join units of other N.A.T.O. Navies in an exercise in the Central Mediterranean and the programme for the exercise was proceeding as previously planned. However, the United States Marine Amphibious Force which was due to rotate at this time was being retained in the Mediterranean, together with a relief force which had already arrived. This would provide a force of two reinforced Marine Battalions for use in any emergency which might arise.

CONFIDENTIAL /2.......

19

T.S. letter from Pritchard to P.M. dated 15th May enclosing letter from Mr. Macmillan re Lebanon together with reply to Mr Macmillan from Mr. McEwen. on special file of Personal messages P.M. to P.M.

[initials]. 23/5

COPY

20

Minister for External Affairs,
Parliament House,
Canberra. A.C.T.

15th May, 1958.

My Dear John,

... I attach copy of the message from Macmillan to Menzies - together with copy of the reply to Macmillan that we agreed upon this evening.

As I told you, I made contact with Mr. D.D. Condon of the United Kingdom High Commission staff, who undertook to get the message to Macmillan encyphered and despatched tonight. I assured myself that he was a responsible person and that he knew about the incoming message from Macmillan to Menzies.

Yours,

(Sgd) Dick

The Right Honourable J.E. McEwen, M.P.,
Minister for Trade,
Parliament House,
CANBERRA. A.C.T.

TOP SECRET

21

MINISTER FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Parliament House,
CANBERRA. A.C.T.

15th May, 1958.

My dear John.

I attach copy of the message from Macmillan to Menzies - together with copy of the reply to Macmillan that we agreed upon this evening.

As I told you, I made contact with Mr. D.D. Condon of the United Kingdom High Commission staff, who undertook to get the message to Macmillan encyphered and despatched tonight. I assured myself that he was a responsible person and that he knew about the incoming message from Macmillan to Menzies.

Yours.

Dick

Copy sent to PM in Melbourne 16/5/58

Copy sent to Tange 16/5/58

The Right Honourable J.E. McEwen, M.P.,
Minister for Trade,
Parliament House,
CANBERRA. A.C.T.

TOP SECRET

22

COPY

TOP SECRET

Minister for Trade

Parliament House,
Canberra. A.C.T.

Thursday night, 15th May, 1958.

Dear Sir Allen,

Tonight Mr. Casey brought me the attached message from Mr. Macmillan to Mr. Menzies, together with a draft reply to Mr. Macmillan, prepared in the circumstance that the Prime Minister could not be communicated with and that the message required a very prompt acknowledgment and comment.

Mr. Holt and Sir Philip McBride, together with Mr. Casey and myself, conferred and agreed upon the attached reply to go to Mr. Macmillan from me. Mr. Casey had the reply delivered to an official of the United Kingdom High Commissioner's office between 10 and 11 o'clock p.m.

Mr. Casey was unable to get into contact with you.

It is understood that there is no means of getting so secret a message as Mr. Macmillan's to Mr. Menzies without unacceptable security risk. Nevertheless the matter is so important and could conceivably break so suddenly that I feel the Prime Minister should not be left until his return without knowledge of the situation.

The only way that I can think of that the information could be got safely to him would be to get it to Perth by some safe telegraphic or secre-phone channel, and from there have the transcription physically delivered to him by safehand. If there is not an appropriate civil plane upon which an appropriate officer could travel, then perhaps an R.A.A.F. plane could be used. I leave the thought and possible arrangement of this in your hands.

I would myself remain in Canberra if there were point to it. Otherwise I would be in Melbourne until my return on Tuesday. I would be glad of your observations on this.

Mr. Macmillan's emphasis on extreme secrecy in this matter led me and my three colleagues to conclude that we should not have wider consultation amongst our Cabinet colleagues upon the draft reply.

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd.) J. McEwen.

Sir Allen Brown, C.B.E.,
Secretary,
Prime Minister's Department,
CANBERRA. A.C.T.

COPY

23

TOP SECRET

Minister for Trade

Parliament House,
Canberra. A.C.T.

Thursday night, 15th May, 1958.

Dear Sir Allen,

Tonight Mr. Casey brought me the attached message from Mr. Macmillan to Mr. Menzies, together with a draft reply to Mr. Macmillan, prepared in the circumstance that the Prime Minister could not be communicated with and that the message required a very prompt acknowledgment and comment.

Mr. Holt and Sir Philip McBride, together with Mr. Casey and myself, conferred and agreed upon the attached reply to go to Mr. Macmillan from me. Mr. Casey had the reply delivered to an official of the United Kingdom High Commissioner's office between 10 and 11 o'clock p.m.

Mr. Casey was unable to get into contact with you.

It is understood that there is no means of getting so secret a message as Mr. Macmillan's to Mr. Menzies without unacceptable security risk. Nevertheless the matter is so important and could conceivably break so suddenly that I feel the Prime Minister should not be left until his return without knowledge of the situation.

The only way that I can think of that the information could be got safely to him would be to get it to Perth by some safe telegraphic or secre-phone channel, and from there have the transcription physically delivered to him by safehand. If there is not an appropriate civil plane upon which an appropriate officer could travel, then perhaps an R.A.A.F. plane could be used. I leave the thought and possible arrangement of this in your hands.

I would myself remain in Canberra if there were point to it. Otherwise I would be in Melbourne until my return on Tuesday. I would be glad of your observations on this.

Mr. Macmillan's emphasis on extreme secrecy in this matter led me and my three colleagues to conclude that we should not have wider consultation amongst our Cabinet colleagues upon the draft reply.

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd.) J. McEwen.

Sir Allen Brown, C.B.E.,
Secretary,
Prime Minister's Department,
CANBERRA. A.C.T.

24

TOP SECRET.

MINISTER FOR TRADE

58/5474

1 6 MAY 1958

P.M.'S. DEPARTMENT SECRET REGISTRY

Parliament House,
CANBERRA. A.C.T.

Thursday night, 15th May, 1958.

Dear Sir Allen,

Tonight Mr. Casey brought me the attached message from Mr. Macmillan to Mr. Menzies, together with a draft reply to Mr. Macmillan, prepared in the circumstance that the Prime Minister could not be communicated with and that the message required a very prompt acknowledgment and comment.

Mr. Holt and Sir Philip McBride, together with Mr. Casey and myself, conferred and agreed upon the attached reply to go to Mr. Macmillan from me. Mr. Casey had the reply delivered to an official of the United Kingdom High Commissioner's office between 10 and 11 o'clock p.m.

Mr. Casey was unable to get into contact with you.

It is understood that there is no means of getting so secret a message as Mr. Macmillan's to Mr. Menzies without unacceptable security risk. Nevertheless the matter is so important and could conceivably break so suddenly that I feel the Prime Minister should not be left until his return without knowledge of the situation.

The only way that I can think of that the information could be got safely to him would be to get it to Perth by some safe telegraphic or secre-phone channel, and from there have the transcription physically delivered to him by safehand. If there is not an appropriate civil plane upon which an appropriate officer could travel, then perhaps an R.A.A.F. plane could be used. I leave the thought and possible arrangement of this in your hands.

I would myself remain in Canberra if there were point to it. Otherwise I would be in Melbourne until my return on Tuesday. I would be glad of your observations on this.

Mr. Macmillan's emphasis on extreme secrecy in this matter led me and my three colleagues to conclude that we should not have wider consultation amongst our Cabinet colleagues upon the draft reply.

Yours sincerely,

J McEwen

(J. McEwen)

Copy sent to PM in Melb. 16/5/58 AAW

Sir Allen Brown, C.B.E.,
Secretary,
Prime Minister's Department,
CANBERRA. A.C.T.

I have decided that I will remain in Canberra for the [illegible]

8 a.m. – leave Kalgoorlie 29

1.30 Broome

P.M. stays with

Mr. Male (Broome 62)

Bill stays at

Wapet camp.

Broome

Dep. of Civil Aviation 37

Aerodrome

Departs 8.15 Sat. for new air area

Wittenoom – during Sat. – leaves Sat night.

Meekatharra – 12.30 Sunday.

W. A. Times

P.M's movements

would be damaging and inappropriate. It seems in any case probable that the new French Government will be far too preoccupied at this juncture with the critical situation in Algeria to take a serious interest in the Lebanon.

8. As you see, the situation is developing very rapidly but I felt that I should tell you myself as soon as I could what had happened so far and what we and our American allies think of doing and why. Please treat the information in this telegram as especially secret. I have sent a similar message to Diefenbaker and am sending a somewhat less full account of the situation to Walter Nash. (We have told the State Department of these three messages.) I am not repeat not taking any other Commonwealth Prime Minister into my confidence at this stage. I shall of course continue to keep you informed but meanwhile I should greatly value your comments. I hope you will feel that the Americans and we have taken the right course. There are clearly grave risks and dangers in responding to Chamoun's appeal but there are even greater dangers in doing nothing.

States Governments have agreed with each other that they should make an affirmative answer to Chamoun's approach and that he should be told that we are prepared - on the request of the President and Government of the Lebanon for assistance in face of what Lebanese Ministers have described as "massive interference from outside" - to give military assistance so as to help the Government of the Lebanon to maintain the independence and the integrity of the Lebanon and to help protect British life and property. We would expect that at least concurrently with a public request to us the Government of the Lebanon would file a complaint with the United Nations Security Council alleging interference by outside forces in its internal affairs and the consequent threat to its integrity and independence. It is hoped that at least some Arab States (e.g. Iraq and Jordan) will be prepared publicly to support the Lebanon in its appeal both to the United States and the United Kingdom and to the Security Council.

6. The British and American Ambassadors in Beirut have so informed President Chamoun, who assured the British Ambassador that the appeal would only be made in the last extremity and said he was now more hopeful that the internal situation could be brought under control.

7. The United States Government and we feel strongly that because of intense anti-French feeling in the Arab world at the present time, French participation in the proposed conditional offer of military assistance

necessary we should be prepared to fulfil those pledges within twenty-four hours if he should formally make a request for military assistance. He said that he might have to make such an appeal within the next two days.

4. We at once consulted urgently with the Americans (though not repeat not with the French) about this approach by Chamoun. At the moment no-one can tell whether it will in fact be followed by an appeal for help as Chamoun foreshadowed or indeed whether Chamoun himself will remain long enough in office to make it. (He may be forced out by the mob if the Army prove unable to hold the position.) But it seems to us that unless we and the United States are prepared to offer some help the present Lebanese regime will collapse and the country be forcibly taken over and incorporated in the United Arab Republic. The moral effect throughout the Middle East of such a coup by Nasser would be very great, indicating as it would the extreme lengths to which the U.A.R. are prepared to go in subverting the lawful Government of an independent neighbour country. On the other hand if we and the Americans make it clear that we are prepared if necessary to intervene the mere fact of our having done so may help to restore the situation since if Chehab sees that we and the Americans are determined if necessary to act on Chamoun's behalf there is some hope that Chehab will take action himself to prevent such a situation arising.

5. After full discussion the United Kingdom and United

TOP SECRET 29

Message from Mr. Macmillan to Mr. Menzies

As you know a very serious situation has suddenly arisen in the Lebanon. Our High Commissioner has already been in close touch with your people about it.

2. On the 13th May President Chamoun informed the British, American and French Ambassadors in Beirut that there was increasing evidence of massive Syrian and Egyptian aid to the armed bands now endeavouring to take control of the Lebanon. These bands are using modern automatic weapons and grenade throwers with which they have been supplied from the United Arab Republic. All land frontiers have been declared closed but infiltrations from Syria have continued. The Belgian Consul General in Damascus was on the 12th May caught smuggling arms into the Lebanon together with written instructions to Opposition leaders. On the 11th May an Egyptian boat from Gaza, with a crew of eleven, was caught landing arms. On the 12th May several Syrian Army men participted in plain clothes in the demonstrations in Beirut and were arrested there. Five hundred men from Syria have attacked Lebanese frontier posts on the Damascus road. President Chamoun had been told by the Army Commander in Chief, General Chehab, that the Lebanese Army would not fail in loyalty but was being hard pressed and he could not guarantee that the situation would not get out of hand if infiltration from Syria continued.

3. President Chamoun reminded our Ambassador and his United States and French colleagues of our past assurances of interest in the independence and integrity of Lebanon and said that he was now asking that if

/necessary

30

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET 15th May, 1958.

Dear Prime Minister,

In the absence of the High Commissioner I have been asked to pass to you the following message which we have received by telegraph to-day from Mr. Macmillan regarding the Lebanon.

Yours sincerely,

N. Pritchard.

(N. Pritchard)

The Right Honourable R.G. Menzies,
C.H., Q.C.,
Parliament House,
Canberra, A.C.T.

TOP SECRET

would be damaging and inappropriate. It seems in any case probable that the new French Government will be far too preoccupied at this juncture with the critical situation in Algeria to take a serious interest in the Lebanon.

8. As you see, the situation is developing very rapidly but I felt that I should tell you myself as soon as I could what had happened so far and what we and our American allies think of doing and why. Please treat the information in this telegram as especially secret. I have sent a similar message to Diefenbaker and am sending a somewhat less full account of the situation to Walter Nash. (We have told the State Department of these three messages.) I am not repeat not taking any other Commonwealth Prime Minister into my confidence at this stage. I shall of course continue to keep you informed but meanwhile I should greatly value your comments. I hope you will feel that the Americans and we have taken the right course. There are clearly grave risks and dangers in responding to Chamoun's appeal but there are even greater dangers in doing nothing.

States Governments have agreed with each other that they should make an affirmative answer to Chamoun's approach and that he should be told that we are prepared - on the request of the President and Government of the Lebanon for assistance in face of what Lebanese Ministers have described as "massive interference from outside" - to give military assistance so as to help the Government of the Lebanon to maintain the independence and the integrity of the Lebanon and to help protect British life and property. We would expect that at least concurrently with a public request to us the Government of the Lebanon would file a complaint with the United Nations Security Council alleging interference by outside forces in its internal affairs and the consequent threat to its integrity and independence. It is hoped that at least some Arab States (e.g. Iraq and Jordan) will be prepared publicly to support the Lebanon in its appeal both to the United States and the United Kingdom and to the Security Council.

6. The British and American Ambassadors in Beirut have so informed President Chamoun, who assured the British Ambassador that the appeal would only be made in the last extremity and said he was now more hopeful that the internal situation could be brought under control.

7. The United States Government and we feel strongly that because of intense anti-French feeling in the Arab world at the present time, French participation in the proposed conditional offer of military assistance

necessary we should be prepared to fulfil those pledges within twenty-four hours if he should formally make a request for military assistance. He said that he might have to make such an appeal within the next two days.

4. We at once consulted urgently with the Americans (though not repeat not with the French) about this approach by Chamoun. At the moment no-one can tell whether it will in fact be followed by an appeal for help as Chamoun foreshadowed or indeed whether Chamoun himself will remain long enough in office to make it. (He may be forced out by the mob if the Army prove unable to hold the position.) But it seems to us that unless we and the United States are prepared to offer some help the present Lebanese regime will collapse and the country be forcibly taken over and incorporated in the United Arab Republic. The moral effect throughout the Middle East of such a coup by Nasser would be very great, indicating as it would the extreme lengths to which the U.A.R. are prepared to go in subverting the lawful Government of an independent neighbour country. On the other hand if we and the Americans make it clear that we are prepared if necessary to intervene the mere fact of our having done so may help to restore the situation since if Chehab sees that we and the Americans are determined if necessary to act on Chamoun's behalf there is some hope that Chehab will take action himself to prevent such a situation arising.

5. After full discussion the United Kingdom and United

Message from Mr. Macmillan to Mr. Menzies

As you know a very serious situation has suddenly arisen in the Lebanon. Our High Commissioner has already been in close touch with your people about it.

2. On the 13th May President Chamoun informed the British, American and French Ambassadors in Beirut that there was increasing evidence of massive Syrian and Egyptian aid to the armed bands now endeavouring to take control of the Lebanon. These bands are using modern automatic weapons and grenade throwers with which they have been supplied from the United Arab Republic. All land frontiers have been declared closed but infiltrations from Syria have continued. The Belgian Consul General in Damascus was on the 12th May caught smuggling arms into the Lebanon together with written instructions to Opposition leaders. On the 11th May an Egyptian boat from Gaza, with a crew of eleven, was caught landing arms. On the 12th May several Syrian Army men participted in plain clothes in the demonstrations in Beirut and were arrested there. Five hundred men from Syria have attacked Lebanese frontier posts on the Damascus road. President Chamoun had been told by the Army Commander in Chief, General Chehab, that the Lebanese Army would not fail in loyalty but was being hard pressed and he could not guarantee that the situation would not get out of hand if infiltration from Syria continued.

3. President Chamoun reminded our Ambassador and his United States and French colleagues of our past assurances of interest in the independence and integrity of Lebanon and said that he was now asking that if

/necessary

35

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET 15th May, 1958.

Dear Prime Minister,

In the absence of the High Commissioner I have been asked to pass to you the following message which we have received by telegraph to-day from Mr. Macmillan regarding the Lebanon.

Yours sincerely

N. Pritchard.

(N. Pritchard)

The Right Honourable R.G. Menzies,
C.H., Q.C.,
Parliament House,
Canberra, A.C.T.

P.M.'s copy sent to him in Melb. 16/5/58.

TOP SECRET

36

TOP SECRET

Copy of message from Mr. Macmillan to Mr. Menzies regarding the Lebanon

With the compliments of the

High Commissioner

for the

United Kingdom

The Secretary,
Prime Minister's Department,
Canberra.

Office of the High Commissioner
for the United Kingdom,
Canberra, A.C.T.

37

PRIME MINISTER'S DEPARTMENT. 6 U.

ASE EJB/JWM

58/5474

20 MAY 1958

SECRET

P.M.'S. DEPARTMENT SECRET REGISTRY

The Secretary:

I have just been telephoned by Pritchard in relation to yesterday's message from Mr. Macmillan.

2. He told me that the reply from Mr. McEwen after consultation with Mr. Holt, Mr. Casey and Sir Philip McBride had been sent.

3. It crossed a message addressed to Ottawa but repeated to Canberra asking that each Prime Minister be told that Mr. Macmillan had kept the knowledge of the situation to a most restricted Ministerial and Civil Service circle, and he hoped that the other Prime Ministers would find it possible to do the same.

4. I told Mr. Pritchard that Mr. McEwen had acted already in this sense. He specifically mentioned to Sir Allen Brown that he had not mentioned the cable to any of his other colleagues.

EJB

(E.J. Bunting)
Deputy Secretary.

16/5/1958 - a.m.

cc. To Mr. Tange.

SECRET

38

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS CONFIDENTIAL

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

I:8038

SDP

Dated: 16th May, 1958.
0150

Rec'd: 18th May, 1958.
1450

(Via Leased Channel)

FROM:

Australian Embassy,
WASHINGTON.

732. CONFIDENTIAL.

Information copies to London and Ottawa.

LEBANON.

Following from Wahl (Israel-Labanon Affairs) on 16th May.

2. Encouraging developments were that Lebanese Army, although fully extended, appeared to be containing the situation and the initiative seemed to be passing from the rebels to the Army. The latter was now showing more confidence and gave every indication of making a vigorous effort to put down the rebellion.

3. A discouraging aspect was that the opposition was as yet showing no evident desire to find political solution through negotiation and compromise. United States Embassy believed however, that some members of the opposition were now becoming worried at the Government's success in characterising the present conflict in Lebanon as East-West issue. Opposition had sent letter to United States Embassy protesting against supply of arms to Government and claiming that issue at stake was internal question.

MIN. & DEPT. E.A.
MIN. & DEPT. DEFENCE
P.M's.

19th May, 1958.

CONFIDENTIAL

39

PRIME MINISTER'S DEPARTMENT.

ASB/JWM

SECRET

Note for the File:

I saw Mr. McEwen this morning and explained that there was no safe way of getting the text of Mr. Macmillan's message to the Prime Minister before the Prime Minister returned to Melbourne. I explained that the department had managed to get to the Prime Minister the fact that there was a message in from Mr. Macmillan and that it was about Lebanon. I said that I thought that the Prime Minister would be able to make a pretty fair guess as to the general nature of the message. I said that I did not recommend doing anything more to bring the matter to the Prime Minister's notice. Mr. McEwen asked whether I thought he should stay in Canberra in the meantime and I said that I did not think that this was necessary. He, Mr. McEwen, is going to Melbourne and he gave me the telephone number of his flat there.

2. I have asked Mr. Herde to make sure that the texts of the messages are available for the Prime Minister in Melbourne.

3. Mr. McEwen raised with me incidentally the question whether, now that he was Leader of the Country Party, he should not perhaps see more of the messages of this sort which are received and asked if I would take the matter up with the Prime Minister. I said I would do so, venturing the comment that I thought that he would find them uninteresting and a frightful nuisance. I said that personally I found them either dealing with something that we had not the remotest interest in, or giving some information which I had already seen in the newspapers 48 hours earlier. Mr. McEwen said that he was inclined to agree and expected that he would find them a nuisance both in reading them and having to look after them. It was left that I should mention the matter to the Prime Minister.

Allen Brown

(A.S. Brown)
Secretary.

16/5/1958.

Mr Bunting

SECRET

TOP SECRET

40

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS.
To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA.

Despatched: 03.10 hours 16.5.58

Received: 16.10 hours 16.5.58

TELEGRAM W. NO. 340 TOP SECRET ROUTINE

My telegram 232

Lebanon

On May 14 there was some improvement in general situation although atmosphere remained tense. There was sporadic sabotage and shooting which was mostly confined to Moslem quarter of Beirut.

2. In Tripoli where telephone system has partly broken down there has been some deterioration and families of I.P.C. staff have been evacuated to Beirut as precautionary measure I.P.C. Refinery is still operating and loading of tankers continues. According to press reports I.P.C. has stated that repairs have now begun to damaged pipeline.

3. It is understood that some of infiltrating bands have been brought under control but infiltration from Syria is continuing in mountains East of Beirut.

4. Relatively quiet situation may only be lull while opposition assesses impact of its terrorism and its political manoeuvring.

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

41

REPORT ON SITUATION IN THE LEBANON

The Army under General Chehab would appear to be the key factor in the situation. Most of the senior officers and nearly all of the staff are Christian but inevitably the substantial Moslem element in the rank and file must be at least uncertain in their aim and this appears to be recognised by the United Arab Republic who are taking advantage of it in their propaganda. General Chehab himself appears determined to remain at the head of the Army and opposed to attempts to remove Chamoun before the expiry of his legal term of office on September 23rd.

President Chamoun appears to have recovered from his earlier pessimism and is again reasonably confident that he can control both security and the political situation without assistance of foreign troops. (but see paragraph 4 of Commonwealth Relations Office telegram W. No. 340).

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET AND PERSONAL

OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER
FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM
CANBERRA

42

16th May, 1958.

Dear Prime Minister,

... I enclose a copy of a report on the situation in the Lebanon which I have been asked to convey to you on a personal basis. I also enclose a copy of a telegram from London (which is also being made available to your Department) to which reference is made in the special report.

Yours sincerely
R. Ritchard

The Rt. Hon^{ble} R. G. Menzies, C.H., Q.C.
Houses of Parliament,
Canberra.

The Secretary phoned at 10 am 19/5/58 & given general line of this report for passing on to P.M. with first despatch.
[illegible]

Seen by Mr Secretary
Cc [illegible] Brown
[illegible] (EA)

TOP SECRET

45

19th May, 1958.

G. Unkles, Esq.
Prime Minister's Department,
Canberra.

With the Compliments

of the

Official Secretary

58/5474

2 0 MAY 1958

Telegram W. No. 349: Lebanon, with reference to my letter of today's date.

Office of the High Commissioner for the United Kingdom, Canberra, A.C.T.

POL. 250/1

TOP SECRET

48

19th May, 1958.

G. Unkles, Esq.
Prime Minister's Department,
Canberra.

58/5474

20 MAY 1958
P.M.'s DEPARTMENT
SECRET REGISTRY

With the Compliments

of the

Official Secretary

Copy of Commonwealth Relations Office telegram No. 745, with reference to my letter of today's date.

Office of the High Commissioner
for the United Kingdom,
Canberra, A.C.T.

POL. 250/1.

52

CONFIDENTIAL

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM. I.8083

Sent: 19th May, 1958
1815
Rec'd: 20th May, 1958
0830

GB/BD

FROM:

Australian Embassy,
PARIS.

197. CONFIDENTIAL.

Lebanon.

I went this morning to see the Ambassador of Lebanon. He said that while the situation was serious, it was less so than represented in the Press. He had spoken this morning by telephone with the Director of the President's Cabinet in Beirut.

2. The Lebanese were not fighting their fellow citizens but Egyptian and Syrians military, wearing civilian clothes. In Beirut the rebels had been obstructing the entrance of city and throwing bombs.

3. There had also been a battle at Trysole which was a wholly Moslem city. Forty rebels had been killed and the Commanding General had now quietly occupied the city.

4. He said reports that the British and American citizens were leaving Lebanon were not correct.

5. As regards the "Pravda" report on the U.S.S.R. attitude the Lebanese Government had had no communication from the U.S.S.R. In any case they would remain pro-west.

6. He commented "We are paying for the folly of American policy over Suez which has turned Nasser into a great man".

7. He said he remained optimistic, both regretting the situation in Lebanon and the situation in France. He ended "We knew de Gaulle well in Lebanon (he is a former Minister for Foreign Affairs). Above all he is a proud man and if it is evident after today that he is not wanted, he will not hang around jockeying for position".

Stirling.

MIN. & DEPT. E.A.
MIN. & DEPT. DEFENCE
P.M'S

20th May, 1958

CONFIDENTIAL

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS. CONFIDENTIAL

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

3. I.8145/6/7

Resort to United Nations.

8. The United Kingdom and France had been pressing the Lebanese to bring the U.A.R. intervention before the Security Council. The United States had refused to press the Lebanese to do this. The United States would, of course, support Lebanon should they so decide but had made point that the Lebanese should be sure of a good case before going to the Security Council.

9. The United Kingdom had made an attempt over the weekend to persuade the United States to change its position on this question, but at a meeting at a higher level of the State Department this morning it had been decided that no change should be made.

10. The reasons why the Lebanese had so far been reluctant to raise a complaint in the Security Council were:

(a) They had insufficient direct evidence of intervention by U.A.R. Government:

(b) The Lebanese were reluctant to be the first Arab country to take another Arab to the bar of the Security Council.

11. Further argument against lodging a complaint in the Security Council, was that the threat of taking such step at this stage was more powerful by being held in reserve.

Situation in Lebanon.

13. One major development was that a truce had been worked out which in effect put Druse out of fight. The Lebanese Army was doing well and the overall security position was improving. But, on the political side there was stalemate and law and order could not be restored quickly until there was some political settlement.

MIN. & DEPT. E.A.
MIN. & DEPT. DEFENCE
P.M'S.

21st May, 1958

CONFIDENTIAL

government to provide the protection to which they are entitled. However, the fact that thought is given to such contingencies cannot be taken as an indication that the United States has concluded that national authorities are not able and prepared to maintain order. 'Present indications are that the security forces of the Republic of Lebanon will be able to maintain constitutional order'.

5. No State Department evaluation had yet been made of the statement put out by Tass in Moscow yesterday, which warned that Western intervention in Lebanon would lead to serious consequences for Lebanon and the Middle East. Bergus commented that he personally thought that its timing after the State Department statement (above) suggested that it had been made for propaganda purposes only.

6. Bergus commented that the United States had to move cautiously. On the one hand it could not afford to see the Government overthrown and it had to provide Chamoun with sufficient support to maintain the morale of the Lebanese authorities. On the other hand the United States did not want to become identified with Chamoun's efforts to get himself re-elected for a second term. The fact that the press had not brought out clearly was that many Christian Lebanese Opposition leaders had signed the call for a general strike. The present disturbances were not a clear-cut Christian-Moslem fight, despite the fact that worse disorders had occurred in Moslem areas, e.g. Tripoli.

7. As a reply to the letter which the United States Embassy, Beirut, had received from the opposition criticizing the United States for the help it was extending to Chamoun, the State Department had issued a statement on 17th May, the substance of which was as follows:-

> 'Some time ago, the United States concluded an agreement with the Government of Lebanon to furnish that Government with certain arms and equipment for use in defending the territorial integrity and the independence of Lebanon. Recently, the Government of Lebanon asked the United States Government to expedite the implementation of agreed programmes and in some instances to augment these programmes. In making this request, to which the United States agreed, the Government of Lebanon indicated that the integrity of Lebanon was threatened by persons acting under alien influence.
>
> 'The United States Government has profoundly admired the valiant efforts of Lebanon in recent days to Lebanon in recent days to maintain its internal security and defend its national integrity. Lebanese political leaders of varying shades of opinion, stressing the importance of using only peaceful means to achieve political objectives, have been unanimous in stating to the United States representatives that they deplored the resort to violence, the attacks on persons and property, and the efforts to disrupt public order in Lebanon. The additional assistance which the Lebanese Government is receiving from the United States has as its sole purpose the augmentation of the capacity of Lebanese Security forces to control and prevent these subversive efforts and to facilitate the restoration of peace and quiet, which the Lebanese people desire and to which they are entitled.'

CONFIDENTIAL 55

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

I.8145/6/7

58/5474

21 MAY 1958

Sent: 19th May, 1958
2300
Rec'd: 20th May, 1958
1645
Transmitted via leased channel

SHA/BD

FROM:

Australian Embassy,
WASHINGTON.

745. CONFIDENTIAL. PRIORITY.

Repeated to Australian Mission, New York. Copies to London (For External) and Ottawa.

Lebanon.

1. The following from Bergus (Israel-Lebanon Affairs) on 19th May.

United States Policy.

2. Dulles was reported by the Washington Post on 17th May as having told Senate leaders that the United States would be prepared to put military forces ashore in Lebanon to protect the lives and property of United States citizens , subject to the conditions:

(a) that the Lebanese Government informed the United States that it could not protect United States citizens and asked for such action:

(b) that the Lebanese Government take its charge of 'massive interference' by the U.A.R. to the United Nations.

3. Bergus confirmed that Dulles has said this but stated that the United States would not consider such action except as a last resort. With the present improvement in the situation in Lebanon it seemed unlikely that conditions in which the United States might wish to intervene would occur. However, units of the Sixth Fleet were now moving into the East Mediterranean to be on hand if necessary, and transport aircraft had been despatched to Germany fromwhere United States troops and equipment could be moved quickly if required.

4. To check press speculation the State Department had given the following statement to the press as background briefing on the afternoon of 17th May:

'The Government of Lebanon is taking measures to deal with the present situation in that country, and has not informed the United States that any need exists which would require the presence of American forces. It would therefore be undesirable to speculate upon contingencies in which such forces might be sent. It is a normal responsibility for the United States Government to consider, in any situation where the lives and property of American citizens might be placed in danger, what measures might conceivably be called for in friendly collaboration with a particular foreign

CONFIDENTIAL

57

GU:AC

20 MAY 1958

58/5474.

Dear Ian,

This is to acknowledge your P.O.L. 250/1 of the 19th May and subsequent reports.

You may be sure that special precautions will be taken in the handling of this material.

(G. Unkles)

I. W. Bell, Esq.,
Official Secretary,
Office of the High Commissioner
for the United Kingdom,
CANBERRA.

TOP SECRET

58

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS.

To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA.

Despatched:

Received:

political compromise. General Chehab is said to have told the President on May 17th that the situation was not bright and that a solution had better be found. Also on May 17th a delegation of Christian religious leaders approached the President to undertake not to try to alter the Constitution. The Christian Moderates(?) are said to be afraid of separatist movements in Tripoli and South Lebanon. It is reported that extreme Moslems may be prepared to come to terms on condition of such an undertaking and a change of Government but extreme loyalists may now want to fight it out.

7. Nasser's speech on his return to Cairo from Moscow is reported to have encouraged Opposition elements. It would, however be dangerous to draw any firm conclusions about the political situation on the evidence available at present.

Attitude of Other Countries

8. Following King Hussein's message of sympathy to President Chamoun early in the crisis both Jordan and Iraq have let it be known that they would take action in the event of open United Arab Republic intervention in the Lebanon. The Israel Government have passed assurances to the Lebanese that they would not take advantage of the removal of Lebanese troops from the frontier area.

9. It is reported that on May 17th activity was ~~XXXXXX~~ normal on all Syrian Airfields.

10. A Tass statement issued in Moscow on May 18th declared that any attempt to use the Lebanese crisis for outside intervention might have serious consequences not only for the future of the Lebanese State and its independence but also for peace in the Middle East and accused the United States and other Western Powers of "preparing a new plot in the Near East". Ends.

TOP SECRET

59

TOP SECRET

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS.

To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA.

Despatched: 00.20 hours 20.5.58

Received: 14.00 hours 20.5.58.

TELEGRAM NO. 751 TOP SECRET PRIORITY

Addressed: Ottawa 691, Canberra 751, Wellington 520.

My Ottawa 671, Canberra 745, Wellington 514.

LEBANON

Following is Lebanon situation report as at 19th May. Begins.

Present Security Situation

The military situation has not materially changed. The Government's control of the urban areas appears now to be sufficiently firm to enable it to detach troops to re-assert its authority elsewhere.

2. The only significant military action over the past two days has been in Tripoli where, after some heavy fighting in which the rebel-held quarter was shelled, the Government has according to press reports regained a certain measure of control. Nevertheless the situation there still seems to be fluid.

3. In the Druse area there has been an armistice between the loyalist and dissident elements leaving the latter free to operate against the gendarmerie.

4. Only sporadic incidents are reported from elsewhere and in Beirut the situation is unchanged and generally quiet.

5. United Kingdom Ambassador in Beirut reported on May 17th that the Refinery at Tripoli had ceased operations because its storage capacity was full and tanker lorries were not working. The Lebanese authorities had given verbal instruction to the distributors not to allow oil products to go to Syria.

Political

6. There is a great deal of political activity around the President and the Opposition and obvious presure on the former to find a

/political

Copy to Defence - my 58/5474 of 20/5/58 refers

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

20th May, 1958.

60

G. Unkles, Esq.
Prime Minister's Department,
Canberra.

58/5474

22 MAY 1958
P.M.'s. DEPARTMENT
SECRET REGISTRY

With the Compliments

of the

Official Secretary

Copy of telegram No. 751: Lebanon. With reference to my letter to you of the 19th May, 1958.

Secretary
M. Bunting

Office of the High Commissioner
for the United Kingdom,
Canberra, A.C.T.

POL. 250/1.

61

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

SECRET

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

FG:HP

I.8154

FROM:

Dated: 20th May, 1958.
1325
Rec'd: 21st May, 1958.
0830

Australian High Commission,
KARACHI.

146. SECRET.

Lebanon Situation.

Yesterday, under instructions, my United Kingdom colleague informed Noon that both the United Kingdom and United States "anticipated" a request from the Lebanese Government for military assistance and asked his views. Noon suggested that arms be provided and that armed forces only intervene as a last resort. He said his Government was not prepared to give advance public endorsement to any proposed action as he feared "another Hungary" and that the United States would "again resile" in the face of Russian reactions. When Fowler then remarked that a few days ago Baig was urging intervention, Noon said he too hoped for it personally but a successful conclusion was an essential preliminary to any public endorsement by the Pakistan Government.

....Cawthorn.

Min. & Dept. External Affairs.
" " Defence.
P.M.'s.

21st May, 1958.

SECRET

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

SECRET 62

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

58/5474

21 MAY 1958

FG:HP

I.8192

Dated: 20th May, 1958.
2040

FROM:

Rec'd: 21st May, 1958.
0830

Australian High Commission,
L O N D O N.

1342. SECRET.

From External.

Lebanon.

The Foreign Office are inclined not to give too much weight to the Soviet statement in Tass warning the Western Powers against interference in Lebanese affairs.

2. Commonwealth Relations Office state that the Government seems to be making progress against the Rebels but the outcome is still doubtful. Much depends on whether the Army will hold together in the face of continuing disorders.

3. We understand that you are being kept informed at the highest levels on policy questions.

Min. & Dept. External Affairs.
" " " Defence.
P.M.'s.

21st May, 1958.

SECRET

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

received Congressional approval and, therefore, we consider that it is a stronger mandate and it gives the President a greater authority than if it would purely have been a declaration by the President himself".

3. Other points made by Dulles were:

(A) Asked whether the United States plan would in any way be affected by Soviet threats, Dulles said: "We are not deterred anywhere in the world from doing what we think is right and our duty, by any Soviet threats".

(B) Asked about differing estimates of U.A.R. intervention in Lebanon, Dulles said: "The Government of Lebanon, which is the best judge of this matter, seems to feel, on the basis of what seems to us to be serious evidence, that there is such interference".

(C) Asked why Lebanon had not appealed to the Security Council about this interference, and whether the United States was suggesting to the U.A.R. that it should stop this interference, Dulles replied: "My impression is that the United States considers that it is up to the Government of Lebanon to try to get the U.A.R. to stop. And while the Government of Lebanon has talked with us about the matter and about possible action in the United Nations, it has made no decision on that point as yet".

(D) Asked whether in speaking about U.A.R. interference he was meaning to absolve Communists from any complicity, Dulles replied: "No, I would'nt want to do that ".

MIN. & DEPT. E.A.
MIN. & DEPT. DEFENCE.
P.M.'S. 22nd May, 1958.

64

AT.6.

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

58/5274

27 MAY 1958

:ABK. I.8272.

Dated: 20th May, 1958.
2000.

FROM: Rec'd: 21st May, 1958.
1726.

Australian Embassy, WASHINGTON. (Transmitted via leased channel)

760. UNCLASSIFIED.

Copies to London (for External) and Ottawa.

LEBANON.

1. Dulles at his press conference 20th May answered a question regarding the possible application of the Eisenhower Doctrine to the present Lebanese situation in the following terms.

"I suppose that by the Eisenhower Doctrine you refer to the Middle East resolution that was adopted by the Congress. That resolution contains several provisions. It is not just one thing. It authorises the United States to assist economically and militarily nations which want such assistance in order to preserve their independence. It says that the independence and integrity of these nations of the Middle East is vital to world peace and the national interest of the United States. It says that if they are attacked from a country under the control of international Communism then the President is authorised, upon request, to send forces to resist that attack.

Now we do not consider under the present state of affairs that there is likely to be an attack, an armed attack, from a country which we would consider under the control of international Communism. That doesn't mean, however, that there is nothing that can be done. There is the provision of the Middle East resolution which says that the independence of these countries is vital to peace and the national interest of the United States. That is certainly a mandate to do something if we think that our peace and vital interests are endangered from any quarter.

There is the basic right, and almost duty, at the request or with the consent of a Government, to assist in the protection of American life and property. There is the programme of military assistance which we render to many countries, including Lebanon, in terms of giving them equipment and certain measures of military training and techniques, and helping them train technicians to use this equipment. So that there are a number of areas of possible action if the situation calls for it.

I would say that we are not anxious to have a situation which would be in any sense a pretext for introducing American forces into the area. We hope and believe that that will not be called for, and the situation, to date, does not suggest that it would be called for".

2. Asked whether he considered the 1950 Tripartite Declaration also applicable to the Lebanese Situation, Dulles answered:

"We do regard it as applicable. We don't regard it as powerful, you might say, as the phrase in the Middle East resolution that I referred to, because that Tripartite Declaration has never had specific Congressional approval. We have always considered that whether action under that, or another declaration that President Eisenhower made, I think, in '56, dealing with these problems, that the Constitutional power of the President to act under those was not as great as though they had received express Congressional approval. The Middle East resolution has

TOP SECRET AND PERSONAL

TOP SECRET

65

21st May, 1958.

Dear Prime Minister,

I am writing with reference to Mr. Pritchard's letter of the 15th May in which he enclosed a message from Mr. Macmillan about the situation in the Lebanon.

In paragraph 3 of that message it was stated that President Chamoun had reminded the United Kingdom, United States and French Ambassadors of past assurances of interest in the independence and integrity of the Lebanon. It may be of interest to you to know that this assurance was given in the first place in a confidential communication to President Chamoun in September, 1956; this has not been made public. The communication was made in the light of the tense situation created by Nasser's seizure of the Suez Canal. The Foreign Secretary, basing himself on the tripartite declaration, reiterated that it was the firm intention of the United Kingdom Government to take immediate action both within and outside the United Nations to prevent any violation of frontiers or armistice lines in Palestine. He assured the President that the continued integrity of the Lebanon was a matter of close concern to the United Kingdom Government.

The United Kingdom interest in the independence and integrity of the Lebanon was re-affirmed orally to President Chamoun, at his request, in February and March of this year at the time of the formation of the United Arab Republic and in the light of a speech which the President claimed Nasser had made in Damascus. In this speech Nasser was said to have threatened to "protect" the Lebanon against Israel.

I have been asked to give you this information in the strictest confidence.

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd.) Carrington

The Rt. Hon[ble] R. G. Menzies, C.H., Q.C.
Houses of Parliament,
Canberra, A.C.T.

23 MAY 1958

Copy: E.A. (Mr Tange) under Sec's comp.slip 23/5/58

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

21st May, 1958.

63

The Secretary,
Prime Minister's Department,
Canberra.

22 MAY 1958
SECRETARY'S OFFICE
P.M'S. DEPARTMENT

58/5674

With the Compliments

of the

Official Secretary

Two copies of letter to Mr. Menzies,
Situation in the Lebanon.

Office of the High Commissioner
for the United Kingdom,
Canberra, A.C.T.

POL. 250/1.

TOP SECRET AND PERSONAL

TOP SECRET

OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER
FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM
CANBERRA

66

58/5474
27 MAY 1958

21st May, 1958.

Dear Prime Minister

I am writing with reference to Mr. Pritchard's letter of the 15th May in which he enclosed a message from Mr. Macmillan about the situation in the Lebanon.

In paragraph 3 of that message it was stated that President Chamoun had reminded the United Kingdom, United States and French Ambassadors of past assurances of interest in the independence and integrity of the Lebanon. It may be of interest to you to know that this assurance was given in the first place in a confidential communication to President Chamoun in September, 1956; this has not been made public. The communication was made in the light of the tense situation created by Nasser's seizure of the Suez Canal. The Foreign Secretary, basing himself on the tripartite declaration, reiterated that it was the firm intention of the United Kingdom Government to take immediate action both within and outside the United Nations to prevent any violation of frontiers or armistice lines in Palestine. He assured the President that the continued integrity of the Lebanon was a matter of close concern to the United Kingdom Government.

The United Kingdom interest in the independence and integrity of the Lebanon was re-affirmed orally to President Chamoun, at his request, in February and March of this year at the time of the formation of the United Arab Republic and in the light of a speech which the President claimed Nasser had made in Damascus. In this speech Nasser was said to have threatened to "protect" the Lebanon against Israel.

I have been asked to give you this information in the strictest confidence.

Yours sincerely

Carrington

Seen by PM [illegible]

The Rt. Hon^ble R. G. Menzies, C.H., Q.C.
Houses of Parliament,
Canberra, A.C.T.

TOP SECRET

CONFIDENTIAL

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

58/5474

GJW:HP

I.8318

23 MAY 1958

FROM:

Dated: 21st May, 1958.
2040
Rec'd: 22nd May, 1958.
1932
(Via leased channel)

Australian Embassy,
WASHINGTON.

772. CONFIDENTIAL.

Copies to London (for External) and Ottawa.

U.A.R. and Lebanon situation.

Report in New York "Times" on 21st May from it's Cairo correspondent (Osgood Carruthers) quoted authoritative Egyptian sources to the effect that Nasser had given strong assurances to United States that it had no intention of trying to force Lebanon into the U.A.R. Nasser was also reported by these sames sources to have repeated the emphatic denial that the U.A.R. was directly involved in or responsible for current disorders in Lebanon.

2. Carruthers reported these sources as expressing the view that Lebanon would be a liability at this time to the U.A.R. But no effort was made to conceal the fact that Cairo would welcome the downfall of the Chamoun Government and its replacement by opposition leaders friendly to the U.A.R.

3. Officers at Desk level of the State Department did not know of any assurances given to us by Nasser, but said that it was possible that higher level of the State Department might know something of this. We will pursue.

Min. & Dept. External Affairs.
" " " Defence.
P.M.'s.

23rd May, 1958.

CONFIDENTIAL

TOP SECRET

68

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS.

To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA.

Despatched:

Received:

Political

6. No developments have been reported.

Intervention by Other Countries

7. Moscow Radio has continued to comment on the Lebanese situation on the same lines as the Tass statement of May 18th. Ends.

SECRETARY OF STATE.

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS.
To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA.

Despatched: 19.33 hours 20.5.58

Received: 08.00 hours 21.5.58

TELEGRAM NO. 756 TOP SECRET PRIORITY

Addressed: Ottawa 694, Canberra 756, Wellington 524.

LEBANON

Following is Lebanon situation report as at 20th May, Begins

Present Security Situation

No significant developments have been reported during the past twenty-four hours.

2. Lebanese authorities have now instructed distributors to fill such Syrian tanker lorries as appear in Tripoli and send them to Syria. Frontier remains, however, officially closed and it is doubtful how many tanker lorries will in fact travel.

The Lebanese Army

3. In the Army there are signs of cracks in the morale of the Muslim element. A number of Muslim officers have intimated to General Chehab that unless the situation is resolved in the immediate future and the fighting ceases they will resign. 30% of the officers and 45% of the other ranks are Muslim.

4. The Army has not been actively engaged as much as the Gendarmerie. Nevertheless it is a measure of Chehab's ability and popularity that it has so far held together and that its morale is high. It is considered unlikely that it would deliberately commit suicide unless the pressure was extreme. On the other hand the defection of even a small number of Muslims would no doubt start a landslide and the military situation would deteriorate immediately.

5. It is also reported that a few senior Christian officers are bringing pressure to bear on Chamoun to resign and stop hostilities. At least one of these is a known Syrian agent.

/Political

21 MAY 1958

Sdy n Defence - My 58/5474 of 20th May 1958 refers.

TOP SECRET

21st May, 1958.

TOP SECRET

70

58/5474

21 MAY 1958

P.M.'s DEPARTMENT SECRET REGISTRY

G. Unkles, Esq.
Prime Minister's Department,
Canberra.

With the Compliments

of the

Official Secretary

Copy of telegram No. 756: Lebanon.
With reference to my letter of
the 19th May, 1958.

Secretary:
M. Bunting:

Office of the High Commissioner
for the United Kingdom,
Canberra, A.C.T.

POL. 250/1

71

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS.

To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA.

Despatched:

Received:

5. The Lebanese Government have had under consideration the possibility of raising in the Security Council the question of the support given by the United Arab Republic to the Dissidents. Their case would be based on examples of interference by Egypt and Syria in Lebanese internal affairs extending over a considerable period in the past, the present aid in arms and equipment which is being given to the Dissidents by the United Arab Republic, the incursions into the Lebanon by armed gangs from across the Syrian border and Cairo Radio incitement to insurrection.

6. Commonwealth Governments will have had fuller reports through you but since these have not been copied to High Commissioners in London this report is being passed to them.

TOP SECRET

72

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS.
To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA.

Despatched: 00.58 hours 21.5.58.

Received: 14.00 hours 21.5.58.

TELEGRAM NO. W.363 — TOP SECRET — PRIORITY

My telegram W. 340.

LEBANON

Situation as at 20th May.

Lebanese Government Forces appear to have position under control in most urban areas. In Beirut atmosphere is now less tense but there continue to be isolated bomb incidents. There has also been an improvement in Tripoli where after some heavy fighting the Government has regained a certain measure of control.

2. In rural areas, particularly on the Northern and Eastern frontiers, Opposition bands are active. In the Druse area there would appear to have been an armistice between the Loyalist and Dissident elements which will have the effect of leaving the latter free to operate against the Government Forces. Widespread infiltration from across the Syrian border continues.

3. The Army has remained loyal and its morale is still high but it is reported that there are some signs of cracks in the Muslim element and of the beginnings of disaffection among certain senior Muslim officers. There is also concern about the danger of fighting breaking out between Christians and Muslims. This risk is likely to increase the longer the present situation is prolonged.

4. There is a great deal of political activity around President Chamoun on whom there is pressure to find a compromise with the extreme Muslims. The latter are reported to have been encouraged by Nasser's speech on his return from Moscow. In view of the Government's firm action so far in dealing with the troubles they may, however, be willing to come to terms. They are likely to try to seek a condition that President Chamoun abandons any thought of seeking re-election to the Presidency.

22 MAY 1958

Defence - My 58/5474 of 20/5/58 refers. 22/5/58

/5.

TOP SECRET

21st May, 1958.

73

58/5474.

22 MAY 1958
SECRET REGISTRY

G. Unkles, Esq.
Prime Minister's Department,
Canberra.

With the Compliments

of the

Official Secretary

Copy of telegram No. W363: Lebanon. With reference to my letter of the 19th May, 1958.

M. Dunting

Office of the High Commissioner for the United Kingdom, Canberra, A.C.T.

POL. 250/1.

TOP SECRET

74

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS.

To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA.

Despatched:

Received:

disorders in the Lebanon itself. They consider that the grounds for any further appeal to the United Nations by the Lebanon have been sufficiently laid by the Lebanese protest to the U.A.R. For our part we feel that there is much to be said for an appeal to the United Nations but that it must be left to the Lebanese to decide. This whole question of an appeal to the United Nations is, however, only a matter of tactics. It does not imply any doubt in the minds of the Americans or ourselves that there has been in fact intervention in Lebanese internal affairs by the U.A.R.

4. It is important that the Canadian and Australian Governments should not get the false impression that the United States has not, independently of us, reached the same conclusion as to the nature of U.A.R. implication in the Lebanese troubles. It is quite true that the press insurrection could not have occurred without the existence of a genuine opposition within Lebanon to the present regime but it could not have reached its present proportions without massive aid and abetment from Syria.

5. If it should ever come to intervention by the West the United States will of course stress the need to protect United States lives and property. They will also rely on the request of the Lebanese Government for military assistance in maintaining their integrity and indpendence. It is not tru to suggest (see Ottawa telegram 455) that the State Department are approaching the problem primarily from the point of view of the protection of their nationals if the implication is that it is to the exclusion of wider considerations.

6. United Kingdom Ambassador in Washington is being asked to take any opportunity that presents itself of clearing the minds of the Canadian and Australian Ambassadors in Washington on the subject. Meanwhile you have authority to make use of information in paras. 2 - 5 above in speaking to Commonwealth authorities.

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS.
To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA.

Despatched: 22.50 hours 20th May, 1958

Received: 11.00 hours 21th May, 1958

75

IMMEDIATE

Addressed Ottowa No. 702.
Canberra No. 759

Repeated Washington.

LEBANON

Ottawa Telegram 455 reports that the State Department do "not think that the information so far supplied to the United States Government by the Lebanese Government is sufficient to justify intervention before the Security Council". This report has reinforced doubts which had been tentatively expressed by Mr. Sydney Smith about certain possible implications of United Kingdom and United States policy. Canberra telegram 468 states that the Australian authorities have also had reports from Washington that the State Department do not regard Lebanese claims that there has been outside intervention as substantiated and doubt whether the Lebanon could make a case against the U.A.R. in the Security Council.

2. As far as we know these reports do not accurately reflect United States official thinking. It is true that the State Department do not consider that either the tripartite declaration or the Eisenhower doctrine should be held to apply to the present situation in the Lebanon: the first because it has always been regarded as applying solely to the frontiers and armistice lines between the Arab States and Israel the second because it would involve declaring the U.A.R. an agent of international communism.

3. They also have doubts about the wisdom of initiating a debate in the Security Council at the moment. They fear that such a debate might not only give the U.A.R. and the Soviet Union a sounding board for their propaganda but also aggravate the present

/disorders

TOP SECRET

My 58/5474 of 20th May. 1958 refers.

- 22/5/58

76

22nd May, 1958.

TOP SECRET

G. Unkles, Esq.
Prime Minister's Department,
Canberra.

58/5474

22 MAY 1958

With the Compliments
of the
Official Secretary

Copy of telegram No. 759: Lebanon.

~~Secretary~~
Mr Bunting

Office of the High Commissioner
for the United Kingdom,
Canberra, A.C.T.

POL.250/1.

77

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS
To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA

Despatched:

Received:

rioters were arrested.

(VII) Further arrests of members of the Syrian Armed Forces or Deuxieme Bureau in Souk El Gharo (Near Beirut) and Beiteddine (where the President's Summer Palace has been attacked recently).

(VIII) Arrest of Soviet citizens in Beirut in possession of explosives and Syrian identification papers.

(IX) The arrest of Syrians for inciting shopkeepers to strike and for being in possession of explosives.

2. You may make full use of this information with Commonwealth Authorities.

SECRETARY OF STATE

Mr Unkles

CONFIDENTIAL

POL.250/1.

78

TELEGRAM

Sx.

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS

To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA

Despatched: 19.50 hours 20th May, 1958.

Received: 09.30 hours 21st May, 1958.

58/5474

PRIORITY

TELEGRAM CIRCULAR W. NO. 358 CONFIDENTIAL

My telegram circular W. no. 346.

LEBANON

Following is summary of examples of U.A.R.'s hand in disturbances in Lebanon. Instances numbered 1 to 6 were quoted by Lebanese Foreign Minister in statement on 13th May. Numbers 7 to 9 have been reported in the press. Begins.

(I) Unbroken arms smuggling into Lebanon from across her frontiers for many months past.

(II) The use of Cairo radio, Damascus radio and the "voice of the Arabs" to broadcast unfriendly statements (in fact they amount to open invitations to insurrection).

(III) The Belgian Consul General in Damascus entering Lebanon from Syria for the second time in twenty four hours is found to have in has car quantities of arms and ammunition and instructions for acts of terrorism.

(IV) An attack on the Customs Post which stopped the Belgian Consul by a large band of armed men from across the Syrian frontier. Five Customs Officials were killed.

(V) Landing of arms and Egyptian money from the Gaza Strip on at least three occasions and the presence of other suspicious craft off the Lebanese coast.

(VI) Participation in the riots in Tripoli of members or ex-members of the Syrian Army. At least twenty four of the

/rioters

Secretary ✓
Mr Bunting ✓

CONFIDENTIAL

info. 22/5/58

TOP SECRET

79

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS.

To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA.

Despatched:

Received:

6. General Chehab's position as he expressed it on Monday evening was that he was disposed to agree to form a Government in the belief that the Opposition would accept him and the grave danger to the country would be averted. His acceptance was on the clear understanding that the President would not stand for another term but that he would serve his full legal term. He had in mind a small Cabinet selected from the present Government and moderate Opposition leaders with which he thought order could quickly be restored. A general amnesty would have to be considered later. The President had insisted on knowing who the succeeding President would be and had emphasised to Chehab that he (Chehab) was the one person who could count on universal support. The General said that in these circumstances he would not refuse to stand for the Presidency.

7. Yesterday morning President Chamoun is reported as saying that the "Chehab solution" was under consideration but that he had certain reservations. Yesterday evening, however, Chamoun had apparently decided to accept the formula whereby Chehab would become Prime Minister provided that the Opposition were willing to do the same and to stop hostilities immediately.

8. Last night the Opposition was meeting on the question of Chehab. According to Chamoun the Opposition would probably take an "all or nothing" attitude and demand his immediate resignation without any further consideration of Chehab as Prime Minister. There appears to be difference about this solution within the Opposition between the potential Prime Ministers.

__Intervention by Other Countries__

9. President Chamoun has reported considerable build-up of Syrian arms including machine guns with Syrian Army Cadre in the Hermal area. We have been unable to confirm this report. Ends.

TOP SECRET

SECRETARY OF STATE.

TOP SECRET

80

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS.
To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA.

Despatched: 22.00 hours 21.5.58.

Received: 10.30 hours 22.5.58.

TELEGRAM NO. 770 TOP SECRET PRIORITY

Addressed: Ottawa 715, Canberra 770, Wellington 528.

My 694 to Ottawa.

LEBANON

Following is situation report as at 21st May. Begins

Present Security Situation.

Yesterday the situation remained generally unchanged with Government forces gradually seeking to extend their control in the Chouf and in Tripoli where a sharp clash occurred on Monday night resulting in a number of casualties. Fighting in Tripoli continued yesterday.

2. On the evening of May 20th a band of Shi'a tribesmen estimated at about 1,500 men under a well known Opposition leader from the North Bekaa were reported to have crossed the mountains from the Hermel area and to be moving against Tripoli. It is believed that they have already been engaged by Government forces.

3. In Beirut conditions remained as for the last few days i.e. the town partly open but liable to close completely if another bomb incident occurred.

4. The South of the country was quiet.

Political

5. General Chehab has given the President to understand that he might be willing to become Prime Minister temporarily for the sole purpose of restoring internal order (which has been the demand of the more moderate Opposition). The President seems rather more inclined towards a "political solution" than two or three days previously. He thinks it now unlikely that he would be obliged to appeal for intervention to the Western Powers.

- 22/5/58 TOP SECRET /6.

My 58/5474 of 20th May, 1958 refers.

TOP SECRET

81

22nd May, 1958.

G. Unkles, Esq.
Prime Minister's Department,
Canberra.

58/5474

With the Compliments

of the

26 MAY 1958
P.M.'s DEPARTMENT
SECRET REGISTRY

Official Secretary

Copy of telegram No. 770: Lebanon, with reference to my letter to you of the 19th May, 1958.

Office of the High Commissioner
for the United Kingdom,
Canberra, A.C.T.

POL. 250/1.

82

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS. CONFIDENTIAL

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

GJW:ABK. I.8325.

Dated: 22nd May, 1958. 0040.
Rec'd: 22nd May, 1958. 2229.
(Transmitted via leased channel)

FROM:

Australian Embassy,
WASHINGTON.

771. CONFIDENTIAL.

Copies to London (for External) and Ottawa.

Lebanon.

Wahl (Israel-Lebanon Affairs) on 21st May, told us that there was now evidence of increased behind the scenes political activity to find a compromise. Lebanese businessmen who were becoming increasingly worried about the loss of business over long term as a result of disorders were playing a prominent part in promoting negotiations between the Government and the Opposition. The compromise being canvassed was for the inclusion in the Government of a number of prominent opposition figures and Chanoun's agreement not to seek re-election after his term expired in September. Chamoun would not be required to make any public statement to this effect but changes in the Government would have a clear implication that he would not run again.

2. Wahl said that while the State Department had not developed any official position, it was clear that the United States' overriding interest in the maintenance of integrity and independence of Lebanon would be met by such solution. The United States would be sorry to see Chamoun go at end of his term but this probably could not be helped.

3. The situation had been quieter in Lebanon over the last two days. However, whether this was merely a lull was hard to say. The Lebanese authorities were concerned about Shia activity in the South, and the situation in Tripoli was still tense and might erupt again. The Lebanese Army appeared to have control of the situation but it was fully extended.

MIN. & DEPT. E.A.
MIN. & DEPT. DEFENCE.
P.M.'S. 23rd May, 1958.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL 83

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

I. 8408

Dated: 22nd May, 1958.
2125

SHA·MP

Rec'd: 23rd May, 1958.
1532.

(via leased channel)

58/5474
26 MAY 1958
P.M'S. DEPARTMENT SECRET REGISTRY

FROM·

Australian Mission to United Nations,
NEW YORK.

NY 350. CONFIDENTIAL

Repeated Washington for information, repeated London for External savingram 56, Ottawa Savingram 47.

LEBANON.

The Secretary General told me this morning that Askoul (Permanent Representative) had informed him officially that Lebanon has asked the Arab League to consider its complaint of U.A.R. interference in Lebanese internal affairs. At Commonwealth meeting this afternoon Dixon said Askoul had given the Secretary General letter for circulation to all members.

2. Dixon said that, according to press reports, Malik was coming to New York to call for a meeting of the Security Council to consider Lebanon's complaint against the U.A.R. Munro said a member of the Lebanese Delegation had given him the same information. Lall said he thought Malik might primarily be coming to strengthen his candidature for the Presidency of the Thirteenth Assembly especially in view of rumours Lall had heard here that the Latins intend to put up a Latin candidate for the Presidency this year. (This would presumably be Belaunde). At the same time, Lall said that he thought Malik might like to be on hand in New York for a Security Council meeting in the event that the internal situation in Lebanon deteriorated or that Lebanon was unable to obtain satisfaction from the Arab League. Dixon said the United Kingdom had taken the line that it was for Lebanon to decide whether to bring the question to the Security Council and the United Kingdom was not pressing Lebanon. The United Kingdom's information substantiated the Lebanese charges that the U.A.R. was interfering in Lebanon. e.g. Gun running, introduction of irregulars and hostile propaganda by Cairo Radio.

3. The remainder of the report on the Commonwealth meeting by memorandum.

MIN.&DEPT. E.A.
P.M's

23rd May, 1958.

TOP SECRET

84

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS.

To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA.

Despatched:

Received:

Republic interference and said the facts were now being placed "before the judgment of world opinion". In answer to questions he said the Government had not yet decided to submit the matter to the Security Council but it is now unofficially understood that it has been decided to do so. Meanwhile the Government is reported to have submitted a complaint against United Arab Republic intervention to the Arab League and requested an early meeting.

6. As regards his own position President Chamoun said he would certainly not resign immediately but he evaded the question whether he would stand for re-election. Ends.

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

85

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS.
To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA.

Despatched: 23.45 hours 22.5.58

Received: 11.20 hours 23.5.58

TELEGRAM NO. 779 TOP SECRET PRIORITY

Addressed: Ottawa 730, Canberra 779, Wellington 535.

My 715 to Ottawa.

LEBANON

Following is situation report as at May 22nd. Begins.

Present Security Situation.

The situation in Baalbek has deteriorated over the past twenty-four hours and insurgents have again attacked and partially occupied the town. Elsewhere only sporadic incidents are reported.

2. With reference to paragraph 2 of situation report for May 21st, it now appears that the incident as described was exaggerated and that only a small skirmish took place. The number of people engaged is not known but was certainly not as large as stated.

Political

3. United Kingdom Ambassador in Beirut reported yesterday morning that the Lebanese Government had decided to appeal to both the Security Council and to the Arab League. This was, however, subject to the approval of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Chamber of Deputies which was expected to meet yesterday.

4. Yesterday morning Chamoun officially offered the Premiership to General Chehab who accepted. Later in the day he warned Chehab that the Opposition might not now accept him to which Chehab replied that he would consult the Opposition. The latter, seizing this opportunity, stiffened the conditions saying that Chehab would not be accepted by them or a cease-fire agreed to unless Chamoun resigned at once.

5. According to press reports President Chamoun at a press conference last night repeated earlier allegations of United Arab

26 MAY 1958

/Republic

[signature] - My 58/5474 of 2/5/58 refers

TOP SECRET

23rd May, 1958. 86

G. Unkles, Esq.
Prime Minister's Department,
Canberra.

58/5474.

With the Compliments

of the

Official Secretary

Copy of telegram No. 779: Lebanon with reference to my letter of the 19th May, 1958.

Office of the High Commissioner
for the United Kingdom,
Canberra, A.C.T.

POL.250/1.

87

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS

To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA

Despatched:

Received:

5. To Pretoria, Karachi, Salisbury. Please inform Commonwealth authority. High Commissioners in London informed.

6. To Delhi, Colombo, Accra and Kuala Lumpur. Please inform Commonwealth authorities.

7. To Ottawa, Canberra, Wellington. Commonwealth Government will have had fuller reports through you but since these have not been copied to High Commissioners in London this report is being passed to them.

HIGH COMMISSIONER.

SECRET

S.
POL.250/1

88

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS

To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA

Despatched: 0001 hour 23rd May, 1958.

Received: 14.00 " 23rd May, 1958.

PRIORITY

TELEGRAM CIRCULAR W. NO. 370. SECRET

My telegram circular W. No. 363.

LEBANON.

SITUATION AS AT 22nd MAY.

Urban areas remain generally quiet. There have been some bomb explosions in Beirut during past two days and shops and businesses are still partly closed. But the Port has resumed working and is now nearly back to normal. Goods are not however, being cleared from the Port area. In Tripoli the situation remains much as before.

2. Scattered fighting continues in rural areas. There has been skirmishing in Baalbeck and a gang of Syrians has been reported in the Hermel Area. There has been no fighting in the Chouf Area which is not however yet wholly under Government control.

3. Political manoeuvring has continued in Beirut. There is a possibility of a political compromise which will have result ofcalming general situation and putting an end to bloodshed but extreme opposition may hold out and demand the President's immediate resignation. At a Press Conference on 21st May, President Chamoun said he would certainly not resign immediately, but evaded question whether he would stand for re-election.

4. Lebanon Government is understood to have submitted complaint against UAR to Arab League and requested an early meeting. At his Press Conference President Chamoun said Government had not yet decided to submit latter to Security Council but it is now unofficially understood that it has been decided to do so.

/5.

SECRET

89

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS

To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA

Despatched:

Received:

5. To Pretoria, Karachi, Salisbury. Please inform Commonwealth authority. High Commissioners in London informed.

6. To Delhi, Colombo, Accra and Kuala Lumpur. Please inform Commonwealth authorities.

7. To Ottawa, Canberra, Wellington. Commonwealth Government will have had fuller reports through you but since these have not been copied to High Commissioners in London this report is being passed to them.

HIGH COMMISSIONER.

SECRET

Mr Anhles SECRET

S.
POL.250/1

90

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS
To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA

Despatched: 0001 hour 23rd May, 1958.
Received: 14.00 " 23rd May, 1958.

PRIORITY

TELEGRAM CIRCULAR W. NO. 370. SECRET

My telegram circular W. No. 363.

LEBANON.

SITUATION AS AT 22nd MAY.

Urban areas remain generally quiet. There have been some bomb explosions in Beirut during past two days and shops and businesses are still partly closed. But the Port has resumed working and is now nearly back to normal. Goods are not however, being cleared from the Port area. In Tripoli the situation remains much as before.

2. Scattered fighting continues in rural areas. There has been skirmishing in Baalbeck and a gang of Syrians has been reported in the Hermel Area. There has been no fighting in the Chouf Area which is not however yet wholly under Government control.

3. Political manoeuvring has continued in Beirut. There is a possibility of a political compromise which will have result ofcalming general situation and putting an end to bloodshed but extreme opposition may hold out and demand the President's immediate resignation. At a Press Conference on 21st May, President Chamoun said he would certainly not resign immediately, but evaded question whether he would stand for re-election.

4. Lebanon Government is understood to have submitted complaint against UAR to Arab League and requested an early meeting. At his Press Conference President Chamoun said Government had not yet decided to submit latter to Security Council but it is now unofficially understood that it has been decided to do so.

/5.

SECRET

CONFIDENTIAL 91

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

GJW.MMc

I.8473

58/5474

Dated: 23rd May 1958
2050
Rec'd: 24th May 1958
1657
(Transmitted via leased channel.)

FROM:

Australian Mission to the United Nations,
NEW YORK.

NY.355. CONFIDENTIAL.

Repeated Washington for information.

From Walker.

Lebanon.

Ritchie (Canada) who is the President of the Security Council for May told me that his present intention is to convene the Council on Tuesday which would be quite satisfactory to Askoul (who was showing great restraint). However, Ritchie added, in the event of Malik coming to New York and requesting an earlier meeting, the President would feel obliged to agree.

2. Munro expressed personal doubt that the United Kingdom attitude was as detached as appeared from Dixon's statement at the Commonwealth meeting yesterday and speculated that if Lebanon brought up the question under Chapter VII there might be a move (provided domestic political conditions in Lebanon permitted) to use the uniting for peace procedure.

3. According to press sources, Jamali is coming to New York to represent Iraq in the Council discussion.

4. We have learned from a reliable source that earlier this week Sastroamidjojo sought advice from the Indian, Soviet and U.A.R.* desire to avoid encouraging similar action by Lebanon. Depending on the outcome of the Lebanese complaint Indonesia may possibly feel encouraged to take some action in the United Nations.

Walker.

---

* delegations whether Indonesia should raise the question in Council of foreign interference in Indonesia's affairs and was advised not to. This advice may have reflected the U.A.R. ....

MIN. & DEPT. E.A.
P.M.'s.

25th May, 1958.

CONFIDENTIAL

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

92

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

:ABK. I.8476.

58/5474

2 6 MAY 1958

P.M.'S. DEPARTMENT SECRET REGISTRY

Dated: 23rd May, 1958.
2120.
Rec'd: 24th May, 1958.
1927.
(Transmitted via leased channel)

FROM:

Australian Embassy,
WASHINGTON.

789. CONFIDENTIAL.

Information copies to London (for External) and Ottawa.

U.A.R. and Lebanon.

Our telegram 772.

Bergus (Israel-Lebanon Affairs) told us on 23rd May that Nasser had spoken to the United States Ambassador (Hare) some three or four days ago regarding the Lebanon situation. Nasser had repeated denials he had made in public that U.A.R. wished to incorporate Lebanon. Nasser also denied that the U.A.R. Government was in any way responsible for the disorders in Lebanon or that it had given any assistance to the Opposition. Nasser repeated charges he had made in public that alleged U.A.R. intervention in Lebanon was merely a trick to excuse "Imperialist" intervention.

2. Nasser had nevertheless made clear his hostility to the Chamoun Regime and had said he could not stop private citizens of U.A.R. from seeking to assist Opposition to Chamoun in Lebanon.

3. Towards the end of the interview Nasser had suggested that the United States could make it known to the Opposition in Lebanon that he was in favour of compromise under which Chahab would become the Prime Minister. This suggestion was declined on the grounds that Nasser had his own means for making this known to opposition in Lebanon.

MIN. & DEPT. E.A.
MIN. & DEPT. DEFENCE.
P.M.'S. 25th May, 1958.

CONFIDENTIAL

93

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

I.8477/78

6. Bergus thought the Lebanese had also been influenced by United Kingdom and French pressure to go to the Security Council. (The United Kingdom Embassy here on the other hand has said that although the Foreign Office and the United Kingdom Mission in New York had at first been disposed to favour the early Lebanese complaint to the Security Council, they had over last week come round to U.S.A. view that Lebanese should be neither encouraged nor discouraged to take such action. In fact Dixon, in conversation with Azkoul in New York three days ago, had spoken at length on need for careful presentation of the case and difficulties involved. We gathered impression, however, that personal views being expressed by the United Kingdom Embassy here to the State Department at desk level have been strongly in favour of action within the United Nations.)

MIN. & DEPT. E.A.
MIN. & DEPT. DEFENCE.
P.M.'s.

25th May, 1958.

CONFIDENTIAL

94

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

FL.MMc **INWARD CABLEGRAM.** I.8477/78

Dated: 23rd May 1958
2140
Rec'd: 24th May 1958
2028
(Transmitted via leased channel.)

FROM:

58/5474

Australian Embassy,
WASHINGTON.

790. CONFIDENTIAL.

Repeated to Austunat New York. Information copies to London (for External) and Ottawa.

Lebanon.

Following from Bergus (Israel-Lebanon Affairs) on 23rd May.

2. It was not yet clear when the Lebanese wanted the Security Council to meet. Azkoul (Lebanese Representative at United Nations) had asked for meeting either on Saturday, 24th May or at latest on Monday, 26th May. However, most recent advice from the United States Embassy Beirut was that Malik was thinking in terms of Tuesday or Wednesday of next week.

3. Bergus commented that it was not at all clear what Lebanese hoped to achieve by going to Security Council at this juncture. They have been assured of United States support but had been asked to be sure of their case and their objective in going to the Security Council. Malik now apparently believed that time was as propitious as it would ever be for Lebanon to press its complaint against the U.A.R. The Lebanese envisaged that if the Soviet Union exercised veto in the Security Council they would seek special meeting of the General Assembly.

4. Bergus thought the Lebanese decision had been influenced by deterioration in the political and internal security position in Lebanon in last day or so. Political negotiations for compromise had been stalemated again. Appointment of General Chahab (Chief of Staff of Lebanese Army) as Prime Minister had proved unacceptable to both sides. Reasons for this were unclear, but Chamoun had apparently decided that he would not accept any solution involving changes in the Government. New outbreak of fighting had also developed when tribesmen from the surrounding countryside had seized Ba,Albek. The United States Embassy, Beirut, also reported that the Lebanese were now beginning to feel effects of disruption of trade as result of disorders. Free port had virtually stopped operating and business had been seriously affected. Lebanese businessmen were becoming increasingly disturbed with the situation and were appealing to the Opposition to come to terms with the Government. Both I.P.C. and United States Oil Refineries had closed down because they were finding it impossible to move refined product.

CONFIDENTIAL

95

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS
To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA

Despatched :

Received :

point was only a pretext. The troubles in the country began in December 1956 and interference of Egyptian and Syrian agents had been going on for two years. The attempt to overthrow King Hussein was similarly planned also the attempt to murder Bourguiba. In these cases no constitutional issue arose. "I am the constitutional authority in this country and am not ready to pay the price demanded by the opposition, not from national motives but for reasons rooted outside the country". President also said that many Syrians were among those arrested including members of Syrian Army. There was evidence of implication of U.A.R. officials. Every Communist was lending a hand. It was untrue that the Lebanese Government were supplying arms to Phalange and PPS; on the contrary many members of these organisations were arrested because found with arms. Questioned whether his statement of U.A.R. interference meant that Nasser's denial of such interference was a lie the President said the questioner must draw his own conclusions.

3. In reply to further questions President said that the Government were considering very seriously reference to the United Nations. They did not yet intend to break diplomatic relations with the U.A.R. "Lebanon is always anxious to maintain best relations with other Arab countries despite events of last two years". On re-election issue "I have never said that I want to amend the constitution; I have never encouraged the idea of being re-elected on formation of new Government". "Normal thing to do is to continue with present government which is not responsible for troubles. Candidature of General Chehab might be considered if it really would end the fighting".

4. You may make use of all the above freely.

SECRETARY OF STATE

POL.250/1.

96

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS

To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA

Despatched: 04.20. 23rd May 1958.

Received: 08.30. 24th May 1958.

PRESSE

TELEGRAM CIRCULAR W NO. 371.

My circular telegram W No. 363.

LEBANON

Following are extracts from Press Conference held by President Chamoun on 21st May for foreign correspondents

(a) issue at stake is not this or that individual or high post in the country. Issue at stake is existence of the Lebanon as a free country in the near East in which Moslem and Christian can live together in peace and concord, a country able to determine its own independent course in freedom.

(b) U.A.R. has been massively interfering in our internal affairs with a view to causing radical alterations in our fundamental national policy...it wants our national policy to coincide with its policy or to be parallel to it. This certainly we cannot do...our life and political orientation in no sense harm the fundamental interests of the U.A.R. This is all that the U.A.R. can reasonably ask of us. But we are determined never to be subservient to its policy or to its fundamental orientation. In other words we are determined to remain independent.

(c) "This is not our battle alone. This is the battle of all small nations everywhere struggling to preserve their freedom and integrity...if the Lebanon should triumph then not only would our children bless our memory but the children of those who now desire and plan our destruction".

2. In reply to questions about connection between present troubles and re-election issue the President said that the latter was a legal issue and should be fought in legal way, not by bombs and appeals for foreign help. Constitutional

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS
To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA

Despatched:

Received:

point was only a pretext. The troubles in the country began in December 1956 and interference of Egyptian and Syrian agents had been going on for two years. The attempt to overthrow King Hussein was similarly planned also the attempt to murder Bourguiba. In these cases no constitutional issue arose. "I am the constitutional authority in this country and am not ready to pay the price demanded by the opposition, not from national motives but for reasons rooted outside the country". President also said that many Syrians were among those arrested including members of Syrian Army. There was evidence of implication of U.A.R. officials. Every Communist was lending a hand. It was untrue that the Lebanese Government were supplying arms to Phalange and PPS; on the contrary many members of these organisations were arrested because found with arms. Questioned whether his statement of U.A.R. interference meant that Nasser's denial of such interference was a lie the President said the questioner must draw his own conclusions.

3. In reply to further questions President said that the Government were considering very seriously reference to the United Nations. They did not yet intend to break diplomatic relations with the U.A.R. "Lebanon is always anxious to maintain best relations with other Arab countries despite events of last two years". On re-election issue "I have never said that I want to amend the constitution; I have never encouraged the idea of being re-elected on formation of new Government". "Normal thing to do is to continue with present government which is not responsible for troubles. Candidature of General Chehab might be considered if it really would end the fighting".

4. You may make use of all the above freely.

SECRETARY OF STATE

Mr Unkles POL.250/1.

98

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS

To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA

58/5474

27 MAY 1958

Despatched: 04.20. 23rd May 1958.

Received: 08.30. 24th May 1958.

PRESSE

TELEGRAM CIRCULAR W NO. 371.

My circular telegram W No. 363.

LEBANON

Following are extracts from Press Conference held by President Chamoun on 21st May for foreign correspondents

(a) issue at stake is not this or that individual or high post in the country. Issue at stake is existence of the Lebanon as a free country in the near East in which Moslem and Christian can live together in peace and concord, a country able to determine its own independent course in freedom.

(b) U.A.R. has been massively interfering in our internal affairs with a view to causing radical alterations in our fundamental national policy...it wants our national policy to coincide with its policy or to be parallel to it. This certainly we cannot do...our life and political orientation in no sense harm the fundamental interests of the U.A.R. This is all that the U.A.R. can reasonably ask of us. But we are determined never to be subservient to its policy or to its fundamental orientation. In other words we are determined to remain independent.

(c) "This is not our battle alone. This is the battle of all small nations everywhere struggling to preserve their freedom and integrity...if the Lebanon should triumph then not only would our children bless our memory but the children of those who now desire and plan our destruction".

2. In reply to questions about connection between present troubles and re-election issue the President said that the latter was a legal issue and should be fought in legal way, not by bombs and appeals for foreign help. Constitutional

99

TOP SECRET

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS.
To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA.

Despatched:

Received:

strong desire to see him finish his present term of office; but even this limited objective can only be ensured if there is a Government willing and able to take the firmest measures. There is increasing support for the idea of a small emergency Government including Chehab as Minister of Defence and of the Interior.

6. United Kingdom Ambassador in Beirut considers that unless something is done immediately to restore the situation the initiative will pass to the Opposition.

7. Increasing tension in the Lebanon is probably largely due to the fact that no immediate political solution is in sight.

8. Although the Lebanese Government has appealed to the Security Council the former appear to be in no jurry to have the matter debated.

Intervention by Other Countries

9. The Soviet press has been publishing inaccurate and tendentious reports from Beirut and Damascus on the situation in the Lebanon alleging inter alia that Britain and the United States are preparing for open intervention. Ends.

SECRETARY OF STATE.

TOP SECRET

100

TOP SECRET

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS.

To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA.

Despatched: 20,00 hours 24.5.58.

Received: 08.30 hours 26.5.58.

TELEGRAM NO. 785 TOP SECRET

Addressed 751,Ottawa; 785 Canberra; 540 Wellington.

My telegram 736 to Ottawa.

LEBANON

Following is situation report as at 24th May. Begins

Present Security Situation

The security situation is rapidly deteriorating. Fighting continues in the Baalbek area and Government forces have withdrawn from their positions in Al Karaj and Baalbek itself. There appears now to be little or no Government control in any of the rural areas and a considerable military operation would have to be mounted to regain them. General Chehab is refusing to commit the Army in anything more than a holding and security role.

2. The general tendency is in the direction of anarchy as security forces are remaining largely in fixed defensive positions on Tripoli, Beirut and Sidon.

Political

3. The Minister of Defence and the Minister for Posts and Telegraphs have resigned. No reason has been given in either case but it is generally believed that the former resigned because he disapproved of Chehab's conduct of operations and was under strong Moslem pressure to do so.

4. Since his failure to form a Government, Chehab appears to be thoroughly disillusioned with the whole situation and prepared to let matters take their course.

5. United Kingdom Ambassador in Beirut reports that in view of the evident impotence of the present Government, confidence in President Chamoun is rapidly diminishing even among his Christian supporters. Loyalist deputies have made it clear that there can no longer be any question of Chamoun's re-election. Nevertheless there is still a

Comm: DEF. 27/5/58 TOP SECRET Action

TOP SECRET

101

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS.
To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA.

Despatched:

Received:

Political

7. Lebanese Government have now decided to submit to Security Council a complaint of the situation "threatening the peace" due to United Arab Republic interference and Lebanese representative in New York has been instructed to take action there. At the same time Lebanese Government have asked for meeting of Arab League and have suggested that it should be held either in Sudan or Libya not Cairo. These approaches are likely to have adverse effects upon the internal situation in the Lebanon.

8. Internal political situation is somewhat confused but it is apparent that positions of Opposition and Chamoun are hardening. As a result situation is likely to deteriorate.

Intervention by Other Countries

9. Cairo and Damascus Radios have stepped up anti-Lebanese and anti-Western propaganda and are inciting Lebanese troops to defect. Ends

SECRETARY OF STATE.

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

102

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS.
To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA.

Despatched: 17.44 hours 23.5.58.

Received: 08.30 hours 24.5.58.

TELEGRAM NO. 782 TOP SECRET PRIORITY

Addressed: Ottawa 736, Canberra 782, Wellington 537.

My telegram 730 to Ottawa.

LEBANON

Following is situation report as at 23rd May Begins

Present security situation.

Insurgents continue to hold Baalbek. Beirut remains reasonably calm but sporadic shooting and bomb throwing continues. In Tripoli insurgents are still in control of old town. In North Lebanon fresh fighting broke out yesterday at Halba.

2. Jumblatt's Druse insurgents are still in control of Chouf area and there are some indications that United Arab Republic may try to co-ordinate his actions with those of other rebel leaders in an advance on Beirut area aimed at enforcing Chamoun's resignation.

3. United Kingdom Ambassador in Beirut reported yesterday that further trouble is to be expected. Prices were rising and there was some shortage of foodstuffs in Beirut. This was bound to lead to general feeling of dissatisfaction.

4. There is evidence from other sources that insurgents may also be suffering from a food shortage.

5. Refinery at Sidon like that at Tripoli has ceased operating.

The Army

6. While President Chamoun claims that morale in Army is high, United Kingdom Ambassador in Beirut reports that number of staff officers are beginning to feel concerned that communal (Christian/Moslem) question may soon begin to have an adverse effect on morale if military action against population has to be continued much longer. This feeling is not, however, yet noticable among officers and men with field units.

Copy: DEF. 27/5/58

TOP SECRET /Political

TOP SECRET

26th May, 1958.

103

G. Unkles, Esq.
Prime Minister's Department,
Canberra.

58/5474

With the Compliments

of the

Official Secretary

Copies of telegrams Nos. 782 and 785; Lebanon, with reference to my letter of the 19th May, 1958.

[signature]

Office of the High Commissioner
for the United Kingdom,
Canberra, A.C.T.

POL. 250/1.

104

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS.
To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA.

Despatched:

Received:

to encourage defection from Chamoun it could also be a cover for overt intervention by Syrian "volunteers" who Damascus alleges have been besieging the Office of Syrian Ministry of Interior with a request to fight with their Arab brothers.

9. The Turkish Government are sending two military aircraft carrying light arms and ammunition for Lebanese Government each night for next fifteen or sixteen nights. First consignment arrived yesterday. Ends.

SECRETARY OF STATE.

TOP SECRET

105

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS.
To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA.

Despatched:

Received:

situation would begin to crumble; and that he believed that moderate opinion would win out and perhaps for that reason was reluctant to take extreme measures against the leaders of the Opposition.

5. United Kingdom Ambassador in Beirut has pointed out certain questions which he and his colleagues feel are still unresolved:-

(a) the President is afraid of driving Sami Solh into the Opposition if there is a change of Government. This probably reflects the cross-currents of intrigue which the President cannot control and his lack of real Moslem support;

(b) They think he may still expect to prove that he is the indispensable man;

(c) He seems out of touch with developing public opinion and to ignore the gradual dissipation of his credit; and does not appreciate the degree of disillusionment of General Chehab;

(d) Failing a political solution there is a growing possibility of an Army coup which would certainly entail the premature removal of the President from Office.

6. On Friday May 23rd the Prime Minister (Sami Solh) told Reuters correspondent that his Government would never ask for an amendment to the constitution to allow President Chamoun's re-election; but affirmed that he opposed the President's resignation before the expiry of his mandate.

7. United Kingdom Ambassador in Beirut received a message from leaders of the Moslem Opposition assuring him that they were not anti-Western but that the revolt was purely internal and directed against the President personally.

Intervention by Other Countries

8. The appearance in United Arab Republic propaganda of a "Free Lebanon Government" whose first "military communique" is quoted by Middle East News Agency on 24th May is possibly a serious development. The Lebanese claim that this communique was broadcast by a "Free Lebanon" Radio located south of Damascus. While this is an attempt

/to

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS.
To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA.

Despatched: 03.00 hours 25.5.58

Received: 12.30 hours 26.5.58

TELEGRAM NO. 787 TOP SECRET PRIORITY

Addressed: Ottawa 754, Canberra 787, Wellington 541.

My telegram 751.

LEBANON.

Following is situation report as at 25th May Begins.

Present Security Situation

The security situation has not deteriorated further during the past twenty-four hours.

2. In course of a conversation yesterday with three Western Ambassadors President Chamoun said that General Chehab had agreed on a plan of military action which would be put into effect within twenty-four hours and it was hoped would succeed in restoring law and order in Beirut, Tripoli and Baalbek and in most of the North-East area. Subsequent operations would be planned for South Lebanon and the South-East mountain area. Confirmation has been received that orders have been given to the Chief-of-Staff to institute much stronger control and start mopping-up operations.

Political

3. The Lebanese representative in New York has told his Canadian colleague that there was some prospect of an Arab League meeting to hear the Lebanese complaint to-day and much would depend on the course of events there. If matters went well for the Lebanese they would probably not want to do more at the Security Council meeting on May 27th than secure adoption of the agenda item.

4. It emerged from a conversation between the President and the three Western Ambassadors on the evening of Friday May 23rd that he had for the moment given up the idea of changing the Government; that he no longer considered his re-election feasible (though the Ambassadors have mental reservations about this); that he was aware of the importance of stimulating Chehab to more vigorous action failing which the security

Copy: DEF. 27/5/58 situation

TOP SECRET

107

26th May, 1958.

TOP SECRET

G. Unkles, Esq.
Prime Minister's Department,
Canberra.

58/5474
27 MAY 1958
P.M.'s DEPARTMENT
SECRET REGISTRY

With the Compliments

of the

Official Secretary

Copy of telegram No. 787: Lebanon.
With reference to my letter to you of the 19th May, 1958.

[signature]

Office of the High Commissioner
for the United Kingdom,
Canberra, A.C.T.

POL. 250/1

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

CONFIDENTIAL 108

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

HB I.8614

Dated: 26th May, 1958.
1800
Rec'd: 27th May, 1958.
2031
(via leased channel)

FROM:

Australian Mission to the United Nations,
NEW YORK.

58/5474
2 9 MAY 1958
P.M.'s DEPARTMENT SECRET REGISTRY

NY.361 CONFIDENTIAL

From Walker.

Lebanon.

The Security Council is scheduled to meet on Wednesday afternoon despite rumours that the meeting will be postponed.

2. Trevelyan told me the Lebanese Delegation were considering four possible objectives in the Council

(a) a presidential summing up without any resolution

(b) a resolution calling generally for non interference in Lebanon

(c) a resolution calling for non interference by the U.A.R. or

(d) a resolution condemning the U.A.R.

Either (c) or (d) would incur a Soviet veto. First stage might be (a) or (b) which would lay the foundation for further complaint if interference continues.

3. Trevelyan considers the Lebanese situation of vital importance to the West since absorption of Lebanon in the U.A.R. would facilitate further expansion and weaken the Iraqi Government, whilst on the other hand the maintenance of an independent Lebanon provides a base for Syrian opponents of Nasser.

MIN. DEPT. E.A.
P.M's.

28th May, 1958.

CONFIDENTIAL

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS. CONFIDENTIAL

109

OUTWARD CABLEGRAM.

JERC:CM 0.6776

Sent: 27th May, 1958.
1200

TO:

Australian Legation,
TEL AVIV.

58/5474

38. CONFIDENTIAL.

Your 33.

Glad of your further comment on Israeli reactions to developments in the Lebanon.

MIN. & DEPT. E.A.(175/11/22)
MIN. & DEPT. DEFENCE
P.M.'S

Cost 16/8

27th May, 1958.

CONFIDENTIAL

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

110

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

MG.MMc

I.8636

Dated: 27th May 1958
1600
Rec'd: 28th May 1958
0830

A.T.S..

58/5474
29 MAY 1958
P.M.'S. DEPARTMENT
SECRET REGISTRY

FROM:

Australian Legation,
TEL AVIV.

37. CONFIDENTIAL.

Your telegram 38.

There is still no apprehension either in public or private in Israel over developments in Lebanon, which continue to excite no special interest. It is still the view of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that in the short term Israel has not been put in great danger by them. The Ministry has no doubts that the United Arab Republic is substantially Ø in disturbances, and that Fedayeen from Gaza have been used. It is not considered however that Israel is Nasser's immediate target, and the Israel-Lebanon border has so far not been disturbed.

Ballard.

Ø Corrupt group.

MIN. & DEPT. E.A.
MIN. & DEPT. DEFENCE.
P.M.'s.

28th May, 1958.

CONFIDENTIAL

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS. CONFIDENTIAL

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

111

I. 8682.

SHA:MP

Dated: 27th May, 1958. 1810.

Rec'd: 28th May, 1958. 1130.

(via leased channel)

58/5474

FROM:

Australian Mission to United Nations,
NEW YORK.

NY 365. CONFIDENTIAL

Repeated Washington for information.

London for External Savingram 58 Ottawa Saving 495.

SECURITY COUNCIL.

Yesterday Dixon was privately critical of Azkoul's repeated delcaration that he had no instructions, which gave an impression of weakness. However, today **Dixon** told me that Lebanon's acceptance of adjournment proposal was based on instructions received overnight from Malik. He said the Lebanese considered inscription and postponement would apply pressure to the Arab League and leave the way open for resumption of debate if necessary. The latter view seems to be held also by the United States delegation though they would have preferred the Council not to meet. Azkoul told me he was well satisfied with the Meeting.

......Walker.

MIN.&DEPT. E.A.
P.M's

28th May, 1958.

CONFIDENTIAL

112

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS CONFIDENTIAL

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

SHA:CM

I.8698 58/5474

Dated: 27th May, 1958. 2015
Rec'd: 28th May, 1958. 1420
(Transmitted via leased channel)

FROM:

Australian Embassy,
WASHINGTON.

833. CONFIDENTIAL.

Repeated U.N. New York, copies to London (for External) and Ottawa.

Lebanon.

The following from Bergus (Israel-Lebanon Affairs) on 27th May.

2. The Lebanese Prime Minister (Sami Es Solh) had announced today that the Government had no intention of seeking to amend the Constitution to enable President Chamoun to run for a second term. This was an extremely important development and Bergus though it might well pave the way for a quick internal solution of disorders. A large proportion of the Opposition was pro-Western and anti-U.A.R. and hostility to the Government stemmed mainly from a dislike of Chamoun. Undertaking that the President would not seek re-election would remove the main point at issue. Some observers maintained that distrust of Chamoun hay reached the point where the Opposition would be satisfied with nothing less than Chamoun's resignation. Bergus thought this was probably exaggerated but anyway the next few days would tell.

3. Further, the Lebanese Prime Minister's announcement now meant that two issues of support for Lebanese independence and support for the re-election of Chamoun could be disentangled. This would make it much easier to support the Lebanese complaint in the Security Council if it was necessary to carry it forward next week. Also, 'in extremis' it would be easier for the United States to intervene should this become necessary to preserve Lebanon's independence.

MIN. & DEPT. E.A.
P.M'S

28th May, 1958.

CONFIDENTIAL

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

113

58/5474
29 MAY 1958
P.M.'S DEPARTMENT SECRET REGISTRY

CM

I.8722

Dated: 27th May, 1958.
1800
Rec'd: 28th May, 1958.
2121
(Transmitted via leased channel)

FROM:

Australian Mission to United Nations,
NEW YORK.

NY364. UNCLASSIFIED.

Repeated Washington for Information.

Security Council Lebanon.

At the beginning of the meeting Lodge paid tribute to service of Colonel Flint (Canadian member of U.N.T.S.O. killed yesterday at Mount Scopus) with U.N.T.S.O.

Agenda was adopted without objection. Sobolev said the fact that he had not objected to the adoption of the agenda did not mean that the U.S.S.R. considered Lebanon's complaint was well founded. Loutfi (U.A.R.) and Azkoul (Lebanon) took their places at the table. Jamali (Iraq) proposed council adjourn until next Tuesday. - The Arab League was to meet at Tripoli on Saturday and it should be given an opportunity to tryto resolve complaint on regional basis. Loutfi and Azkoul made brief interventions indicating that they had no objection to this proposal. In reply to further comment by Sobolev, Jamali stated that if Arab League was able to resolve the question there would be no need for another meeting and he assumed Azkoul would in that event inform the council. Azkoul said he would do so. There being no objection council adjourned.

MIN. & DEPT. E.A.
P.M'S

29th May, 1958.

TOP SECRET

TELEGRAM

114

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS.

To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA.

Despatched:

Received:

5. In conversation referred to in paragraph 2 above Chehab informed United Kingdom Ambassador that he had no intention of entering the political arena himself and that he was disillusioned with President and with all politicians.

SECRETARY OF STATE

TO... ..CRET

TOP SECRET

115

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS.

To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA.

Despatched: 17.58 hours 27.5.58

Received: 08.30 hours 28.5.58

TELEGRAM NO. 792 TOP SECRET PRIORITY

Addressed: Ottawa 761, Canberra 792, Wellington 545.

My No. 754 to Ottawa.

LEBANON

Following is situation report as at 27th May. Begins

Present Security Situation

Apart from two bomb incidents in Beirut (one of them serious) reported in the press, there have been no further reports about security situation in Lebanon.

2. In course of conversation with United Kingdom Ambassador in Beirut, General Chehab stated that Army would continue to contain dissidents but that no dramatic plan of campaign had been evolved. Chehab considered that without relaxation of political tension security situation would remain unstable. Nevertheless United Kingdom Ambassador considers that in view of Army's action against dissidents during past three days security situation should now gradually begin to improve if nothing unforeseen occurs.

Political

3. It has been officially announced in Khartoum that meeting of Arab League will be held in Tripoli (Libya) and not in Khartoum as previously reported. The Lebanese Foreign Minister appears to have gone to New York for Security Council debate which is due to take place this afternoon. It is still not clear whether Lebanon will delay action in New York until after Arab League meeting.

4. United Kingdom Ambassador in Beirut reports that there are signs of a detente on political front since it is becoming generally accepted that President will not seek re-election. Report that Nasser has postponed his visit to Damascus is taken in Beirut as sign that United Arab Republic is not anxious to increase pressure on Lebanon and risk consequent danger of Western military intervention.

Copy: DEF. - 28/5/58 TOP SECRET /5.

TOP SECRET

116

P.M.C.

58/5474

30 MAY 1958

P.M.'s DEPARTMENT

28th May, 1958.

G. Unkles, Esq.
Prime Minister's Department,
Canberra.

With the Compliments

of the

Official Secretary

Copy of telegram No. 792
Lebanon: with reference to my
letter of the 19th May, 1958.

Office of the High Commissioner
for the United Kingdom,
Canberra, A.C.T.

POL.250/1

CONFIDENTIAL

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

117

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

BD:CM

I.8783

Dated: 28th May, 1958.
2110
Rec'd: 29th May, 1958.
1030.

FROM:

Australian High Commission,
LONDON.

1427. CONFIDENTIAL.

Repeated Saving to Washington.

From External.

Lebanon.

1. Foreign Office advise that with the announcement by the government that they would not amend the constitution to permit Chamoun a second term, moderate support should swing back behind the government with resulting improvement in the internal situation but disorders provoked by extremists would continue. The army and police were now meeting with success against armed bands in the North and East and Baalbek had been retaken by government forces.

2. Foreign Office think that if the Lebanese formulated their complaint to the Arab League in fairly moderate terms they should get majority support at meeting (to take place on 29th and 31st May probably in Tripoli). If this were so then the Lebanese might not proceed in the Security Council. The United Kingdom were encouraging the Lebanese in bringing matter to the Arab League.

MIN. & DEPT. E.A.
MIN. & DEPT. DEFENCE
P.M'S

29th May, 1958.

CONFIDENTIAL

that Lebanon should play down, in public at least, its associations with the West, and seek some improvement in relations with Nasser.

On the other hand the present Government, which accepted the Eisenhower doctrine and which is pledged to join neither the U.A.R. nor the Arab Union, sees Western protection as the only hope for continued Lebanese independence.

At a press Conference on 21st May President Chamoun said that the U.A.R. had been "massively interfering" in Lebanese internal affairs with a view to causing radical alternations in Lebanese fundamental national policy. "The U.A.R. wants our national policy to coincide with its policy and be parallel to it. This certainly we cannot do ... our life and political orientation in no sense harm the fundamental interests of the U.A.R. But we are determined never to be subservient to its policy or to its fundamental orientation".

Political Moves

There is considerable political pressure on Chamoun and on the opposition leaders to find a political solution to the disturbances which are disrupting trade as well as public order and safety. Attempts to seek a solution by appointing General Chehab, Commander in Chief, as Prime Minister appear to have met with failure. President Chamoun has refused any suggestion that he resign forthwith, and Opposition leaders refuse to call off the general strike unless he does. Chamoun has so far not said whether he will stand for re-election when his term of office expires in September.

Attitude of Other Countries

The United States and United Kingdom have friendly relations with Lebanon and the present Government.

At a recent press conference Mr. Dulles outlined his understanding of the Eisenhower doctrine. He stressed the provision in the Congressional Resolution concerned that the independence of all Middle Eastern countries is vital to peace and the national interest of the United States. Mr. Dulles regarded this as a mandate to do something "if we think our peace and vital intereststs are endangered from any quarter". The United States would not be deterred from doing its duty by Soviet threats. Mr. Dulles also stressed the United States duty, on request by any Government, to assist it in protecting American life and property.

Jordan has sent a public message of support to President Chamoun. Iraq has privately indicated support for the present Lebanese Government. Nasser has denied any responsibility for inciting or continuing the riots, and has said that the U.A.R. has no intention of trying to incorporate Lebanon.

119

CONFIDENTIAL

58/5474

30 MAY 1958

LEBANON

Present Situation

The rioting which began in Lebanon on 9th May was the immediate result of the murder of a prominent Moslem opposition newspaper editor and is aimed at forcing the resignation of the present Government headed by Camille Chamoun. The most severe fighting has taken place in the northern Moslem city of Tripoli, but there have also been ugly incidents and bomb throwing in Beirut and Sidon. According to latest reports the Government has resumed a measure of control in the urban areas. This has made possible the detachment of some troops in an effort to reassert the Government's authority in rural areas which are at present largely under opposition control. Failure to reach a solution within a reasonable time may create risks of cracks in the morale of the Moslem element of the Lebanese Army.

The Lebanese Government has submitted a complaint to the Arab League against intervention by the United Arab Republic in Lebanese internal affairs and has made a similar complaint to the Security Council which will consider it on May 27th. This will be the first time an Arab State has availed itself of U.N. machinery to air a complaint against another Arab state.

From press reports and a statement by Foreign Minister Malik on May 13th, evidence of U.A.R. intervention appears to compromise: smuggling of arms from Syria into Lebanon for months past, inflammatory broadcasts from Cairo to Damascus; an attack on a Lebanese customs post by an armed band from Syria; the participation in the Tripoli riots of members of the Syrian Army or Deuxieme Bureau; the arrest of Soviet citizens in Beirut in possession of explosives and Syrian identification papers; the detention off the South Lebanese coast of boats laden with arms and money from the Gaza Strip and the attempt of the Belgian Consul in Damascus to cross the Lebanose border with a carload of small arms and letters to the Lebanese Opposition leaders.

Background

The population of Lebanon is about 1.4 million and the Lebanese electorate is, broadly speaking, half Moslem, half Christian. Recognising the risk of religious disturbances in a soceity so divided, the Lebanese political system allocates seats in the Chamber on a religious basis as follows: Maronite Christians 13, Greek Orthodox 5, Greek Catholic 3, Armenian Orthodox 2, Sunni Moslems 9, Shia Moslems 8, Druzes 3, minorities 1. In addition, there is a series of constitutional conventions whereby the President is always a Maronite Christian, the Prime Minister a Sunni Moslem and the Speaker a Shai Moslem. (Fear of upsetting the delicate religious balance of the Lebanese political system at least partly explains why it has not been felt advisable to give a vote to the 200,000 odd Palestinian refugees in Lebanon).

The creation of the United Arab Republic has stimulated pan-Arab fervour among the Moslem population of Lebanon, and this has exacerbated the latent religious tensions in the country. Other factors contributing to the present disturbances are general uncertainty as to Lebanon's future and the manoeuvrings concerned with the amendment of the constitution which would be required to permit President Chamoun to run for a second term of office. The question of Chamoun's re-election has been a central issue in the present disturbances. The more extreme Opposition elements are violently opposed because of Chamoun's anti-Nasser and pro-Western policies. It is these elements who are now in open rebellion and demanding the Government's resignation. There is also undoubtedly some opposition among moderates and Christians to such a departure from Lebanon's constitutional traditions. Many Lebanese politicians probably feel

CONFIDENTIAL /that Lebanon

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS

To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA

Despatched:

Received:

6. Insurgent forces continue to receive arms, ammunition and personnel reinforcements from the United Arab Republic. (U.A.R.)

7. According to Cairo Radio Saeb Salam the extreme Opposition Leader has said that if the Lebanese Government "use" the Citizens Auxiliary Security Force (which the Government have announced plans to form) the Opposition will call on the U.A.R. for "volunteers". ENDS.

SECRETARY OF STATE.

SECRET

POL.250/1.

Mr Unkles

121

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS

To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA

58/5474

- 2 JUN 1958

Despatched: 23.15 hours. 28th May 1958.

Received: 11.00 hours. 29th May 1958.

PRIORITY

TELEGRAM NO. 803 ... SECRET

United Kingdom High Commissioners Ottawa No. 771, Canberra No. 803, Wellington No. 551.

My No. 761 to Ottawa.

LEBANON.

Following is situation report as at 28th May. BEGINS.

Present security situation. There is nothing further to report.

Political.

2. Yesterday afternoon after inscription of the Lebanese complaint on agenda the Security Council agreed to adjourn and meet again on 3rd June unless the Lebanese representative informed President that the complaint had been satisfactorily settled in the Arab League and that he did not wish for a meeting. This procedure was in accordance with wishes of the Lebanese Government.

3. Lebanese Council of Ministers announced yesterday that:-

(a) no amendment to constitution could be presented to Chamber of Deputies;

(b) no extraordinary session of Chamber would be called to consider amendment to constitution (ordinary session ends on 31st May).

4. Implication of this is that the Cabinet will refuse to permit the constitution to be modified to enable the President to stand for re-election. It seems unlikely however that this concession will now satisfy those elements of the Opposition who continue to demand the President's immediate resignation.

Intervention by other countries.

5. During a call at Lebanese Ministry for Foreign Affairs on 20th May Soviet Ambassador in Beirut confirmed that Soviet Union had no intention of interfering in Lebanese internal affairs.

COM. DEF. My 58/5474 of 20.5.58 refers 30/5/58

SECRET

..../6.

CONFIDENTIAL

122

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

I.6695

58/5474

SDP

Dated: 29th May, 1958.
1930

Rec'd: 30th May, 1958.
1641

(Via Leased Channel)

FROM:

Australian Embassy,
WASHINGTON.

859. CONFIDENTIAL.

Copies to Ottawa and London (For External).

Repeated to New York.

Lebanon.

Bergus (Israel-Lebanon Affairs) told us on 29th May that the prospects for political settlement in Lebanon looked hopeful. Serious negotiations between the Government and Opposition were now taking place and the security position had improved as compared with earlier this week. Bergus said he would not want to make a firm prediction, but there was a possibility that agreement would be reached within the next two days.

MIN. & DEPT. E.A.
P.M's.

31st May, 1958.

TOP SECRET

123

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS.
To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA.

Despatched:

Received:

political intrigues make it difficult to find out at any given moment what in fact are the intentions of any political leader. There is therefore a feeling of growing pessimism about the possibility of working out a political compromise. In these circumstances there is inevitably a tendency to revert to the idea of Western intervention as the only means of providing a solution to the immediate problem. This latter reaction according to President Chamoun has affected General Chehab himself.

6. It has now been confirmed that a meeting of the Arab League will be held in Banghazi on 31st May.

Intervention by other countries

7. There are indications that the U.A.R. have begun to mount a propaganda campaign alleging that Iraqi and Jordanian troops are operating with Government forces. These allegations may be used as an additional pretect for intervention by "U.A.R. Volunteers".

8. There are indications that large sums of money from the U.A.R. are being sent into Beirut for the strikers. Ends.

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

124

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS.
To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA.

Despatched: 03.15 hours 30.5.58.
Received: 15.45 hours 30.5.58.

TELEGRAM NO. 813 TOP SECRET PRIORITY

Addressed: Ottawa 787, Canberra 813, Wellington 558.

My telegram No. 771 to Ottawa.

LEBANON

Following is situation report as at 29th May Begins

Present Security Situation

The Chief of Staff, Colonel Towfiq Salem, has informed the President that the Army cannot guarantee to bring about a rapid solution of the security problem. This is probably a correct statement even though the Chief of Staff is known to be anti-Chamoun and is personally involved in local politics.

2. There have been more sporadic incidents in Beirut and press reports as yet unconfirmed of more serious fighting on the night of 28/29the May. The Opposition leaders in the Arab quarter are reported to be losing their grip and control appears to be passing to individual gang leaders rather than to the security forces. These leaders are reported to be collecting money by force in their own districts.

3. There was renewed street fighting in Tripoli on 27th May. A lorry was ambushed by the security forces on the road running from the Syrian border to Tripoli and was found to contain 80 Beretta S.M.G.S.
60 rifles, 10 cases of hand grenades and equipment with Syrian Army markings.

4. An insurgent attack is expected in the near future in the Baalbek area. The Army have now reoccupied the area of Saghbine.

Political

5. Despite these military activities there is no reason to believe that a final military solution is in sight. But the political situation is also obscure. Double-crossing, lying and personal

/political

Copy:
DEF. 2/6/58

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

[redacted] May, 1958. 125

58/5474

5 JUN 1958
P.M.'S DEPARTMENT
SECRET REGISTRY

G. Unkles, Esq.
Prime Minister's Department,
Canberra.

With the Compliments

of the

Official Secretary

Copy of telegram No. [redacted]
Lebanon: with reference to my
letter of the 19th May, 1958.

Office of the High Commissioner
for the United Kingdom,
Canberra, A.C.T.

POL.250/1

SECRET

126

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS

To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA

Despatched :

Received :

3. Political situation is confused. Prime Minister's statement that Government has no intention of taking steps to make possible President Chamoun's re-election, although it has had only limited impact, has improved chance of eventual political solution. All but most extreme opposition accept in light of Prime Minister's declaration that President Chamoun should complete his term and remain in office until the 23rd September. But an early political solution seems unlikely.

4. Lebanese case will be presented to Arab League at meeting on 31st May the Lebanese hope to get useful support from Iraq and Jordan. They also hope that Sudan and Libya may be disposed to speak on their behalf. After United Arab Republic (U.A.R.) has stated its side of question Lebanese intend if no outright condemnation of U.A.R. intervention seems likely to ask for a team of observers from Sudan and Tunisia whose function would be to report on infiltration across Lebanese frontier and on extent of support which rebels are receiving from outside. If this also fails case will be pressed in Security Council. Lebanese expect that whole process should be completed in three days time for Security Council meetings on 3rd June.

5. Ottawa, Canberra, Wellington, Pretoria and Salisbury. Please inform Commonwealth authorities. Five Commonwealth High Commissioners in London have been informed.

6. (Delhi, Karachi, Colombo, Accra, Kuala Lumpur). You have discretion to inform Commonwealth authorities.

SECRETARY OF STATE.

SECRET

SECRET

127

TELEGRAM

POL.250/1.
'S'

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS
To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA

Despatched: 00.50. 31st May, 1958.
Received: 18.30. 31st May, 1958.

58/5474
2 JUN 1958

PRIORITY.

~~addd~~ TELEGRAM CIRCULAR W NUMBER 390. SECRET.

Addressed United Kingdom High Commissioners Ottawa, Canberra, Wellington, Pretoria, Salisbury W No.390, repeated other posts.

My telegram circular W No.381.

LEBANON.

Internal security situation generally remains unchanged. Opposition groups remain in control of considerable sectors of country both in North East and in Chouf where there are reports that armed bands of several hundred are still roaming freely. There seems little doubt that infiltrations are continuing on an increasingly important scale. Estimates are that between 6,000 and 9,000 armed dissidents are now operating in Lebanon - fighting is therefore tending to assume more serious character than merely local skirmishes. Unconfirmed reports also say that operations of dissidents are now being centrally controlled from Damascus. It is also said that there are concentrations of volunteers in civilian dress on Syrian side of frontier numbering more than 1,000 who can shortly be expected to move into Lebanese territory.

2. In view of United Kingdom Ambassador at Beirut Lebanese Army continues to be efficiently handled and is well deployed. Air Force has been particularly effective in detecting and dispersing armed bands and infiltrators bringing arms and ammunition from Syria. Army is however fully extended and has no further reserves to call upon. Moreover so long as main military effort has to be concentrated in Beirut and Tripoli and to a lesser extent in Sidon and Tyre it cannot simultaneously restore Government control in mountain areas and Bekaa Valley nor can it adequately support Air Force in supervising Syrian frontier.

2 JUN 1958

Copy:
DEF. 2/6/58 - My 58/5474 of 20/5/58 refers

/3.

SECRET

CONFIDENTIAL

POL. 250/1.
'Sx' 128

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS
To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA

Despatched: 03.30 hours. 31st May, 1958. 58/5474
Received: 18.30 hours. 31st May, 1958.

2 JUN 1958

ROUTINE

TELEGRAM NO. 819. CONFIDENTIAL

U.K High Commissioners Ottawa No. 796, Canberra No. 819, Wellington No. 559.

My telegram No. 787 to Ottawa.

LEBANON.

It is not proposed to continue to produce situation reports daily.

2. My telegram Circular W..No. 390 contains most up to date information at present available on Lebanon.

SECRETARY OF STATE.

2 JUN 1958

Copy: DEF. 2/6/58 - My 58/5474 of 20 May 1958 refers

CONFIDENTIAL

129

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS.
To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA.

Despatched:

Received:

presumably centres on Chehab's alleged reluctance to use the Army wholeheartedly. The United States Ambassador believes that the President may be thinking of dismissing the General. If he did so there is a danger that the latter might refuse to abandon the Army and be encouraged to lead a military coup against the President. Ends.

TOP SECRET

130

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS.

To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA.

Despatched: 22.30 hours. 2.6.58.

Received: 10.45 hours 3.6.58.

TELEGRAM NO. 823 TOP SECRET PRIORITY

Addressed: Ottawa 811, Canberra 823, Wellington 566.

My W. No. 394

LEBANON

Following is further information about situation in Lebanon of more secret nature than that contained in my telegram under reference which you may pass to Canadian/Australian/New Zealand authorities on same basis as daily situation reports which have been sent to you in past. Begins.

A political compromise remains as remote as ever and United Kingdom Ambassador in Beirut reports that he and his United States and French colleagues consider that a press conference given by the Maronite Christian Patriach, Monsigneur Meouchi on 30th May has destroyed for the moment (3 groups missing ?any hope of?) reconciliation between the Government and the moderate Opposition. At this press conference M. Meouchi, who is personally very hostile to President Chamoun, stated that the trouble were basically internal in origin. That the Opposition were patriotic and intelligent men and that the Government were "a handful of opportunists". He demanded the President's resignation and suggested that the only solution was the formation of a Government under General Chehab. The Patriach is, however, a volatile personality and he has recently express views in private which appear to conflict with what he said ~~xxxxxxxx~~ publicly at his press conference.

There is little evidence that General Chehab will be prepared to accept office as Prime Minister and it is believed that the present incumbant, Sami Solh, would oppose him on the grounds that the office is by convention reserved for a Moslem.

Moreover, the United States Ambassador believes that there have been further dissensions between Chamoun and Chehab regarding the conduct of military operations. The difference between them

Circ: DEF. 5/6/58 TOP SECRET

4th June, 1958.

TOP SECRET

131

58/5474

- 5 JUN 1958

P.M.'S. DEPARTMENT SECRET REGISTRY

G. Unkles, Esq.
Prime Minister's Department,
Canberra.

With the Compliments

of the

Official Secretary

Telegrams Nos. W.394 and 823.
With reference to my letter of the 19th May, 1958.

Office of the High Commissioner
for the United Kingdom,
Canberra, A.C.T.

5 JUN 1958

POL.250/1

Copies Defence.

SECRET

132

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS.
To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA.

Despatched:

Received:

United Arab Republic would get themselves in wrong with all their neighbours. Draft of speech to be made by Iraqi delegate contains strong attack on Egypt. Egyptian Radio and press are accused of instigating people and armed forces of Iraq against their legitimate Government and reference is made to Krhushchev's speech on 16th May in which he expressed Soviet desire to see Arab Unity under leadership of Nasser. Speech goes on to attack Egyptian interference in internal affairs of Lebanon with emphasis on smuggling of arms and explosives, despatch of United Arab Republic armed forces and terrorists to Lebanon and attacks from Cairo and Damascus Radio.

6. First business session of conference was held in secret on 2nd June. It is reported that a further meeting will be held tomorrow. Leader of Lebanese delegation is understood to have promised to take steps to secure postponement of Security Council meeting until Arab League has finished examining subject.

7. As regards Lebanese tactics at Security Council, Lebanese Foreign Minister has said that his ideas are still flexible and that much will depend on outcome of Arab League meeting. On balance he thought he would be content with getting strongest available support for Lebanese case without carrying matter to vote (and inevitable Soviet veto). Possibility of asking for neutral observers of Syria/Lebanon frontier/was envisaged but this would depend on course of debate.

(Ottawa, Canberra, Wellington Pretoria)
8. / Please inform Commonwealth authorities. Four Commonwealth High Commissioner's in London have been informed.

SECRET

SECRET

133

58/5474

5 JUN 1958

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS.

To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA.

Despatched: 00.01 hours 3.6.58

Received: 14.30 hours 3.6.58.

TELEGRAM W.394 — SECRET — PRIORITY

Addressed: Ottawa, Canberra, Wellington, Pretoria, Salisbury.

Repeated: Others.

My W.390

LEBANON

General situation remains unchanged. Beirut has been quiet with shops and businesses increasingly open. There was much shooting in Tripoli on 30th May following one of two casualties inflicted on Army. No estimate of losses ~~xxx~~ among townspeople can be given but casualties are said to have been considerable.

2. Stalemate in Chouf region remains unchanged with much territory under effective control of Kamel Jumblatt and his Druses but no fighting has taken place. There is a slight improvement in the Bekaa Valley where Opposition elements have clashed amongst themselves.

3. Formal opening session of Arab League Conference on Lebanon took place at Benghazi on 31st May. Libyan Prime Minister opening conference said he hoped present crisis between Arab countries would be solved by sound judgement of Arabs. In reply Sudanese Minister for Foreign Affairs spoke in similar vein.

4. Iraqi delegate to conference was unable to leave as planned on 29th May owing to bad weather and attempt ~~ix~~ by Iraqi Government to send him via Beirut by military aircraft was frustrated by refusal of United Arab Republic to grant clearance. In event he was compelled to await Civil aircraft travelling via Egypt on 31st May.

5. United Kingdom Ambassador at Baghdad has been informed by Iraqis that their delegate has been instructed to take strong line in support of Lebanon and to propose resolution pledging all members of League to refrain from interference and subversion whether by arms, radio appeals or otherwise against Governments of sister Arab States. Iraquis consider that if United Arab Republic accepts this resolution it will strengthen the hand of Lebanon before Security Council unless all such interference stopped at once. By turning down resolution

Copy: DEF. 5/6/58

SECRET

CONFIDENTIAL

SX POL. 250/1.

134

TELEGRAM

58/5474

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS

To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA

Despatched: 18.10 hours. 3rd June, 1958.

Received: 08.00 hours. 4th June, 1958.

5 JUN 1958

PRIORITY.

Telegram Circular W. No. 395. CONFIDENTIAL

My telegram Circular W. No. 394.

LEBANON.

In period since report in my telegram under reference no major clash has occurred anywhere in Lebanon but minor ones have taken place in Sidon and Baalbeck. Some explosions took place during night of June 1/2 in Beirut which will no doubt have the effect of discouraging the reopening of the shops.

2. Village meetings have taken place in certain summer resorts inhabited by mixed Druse and Christian populations in order to enforce a truce and try to ensure a peaceful summer season.

3. No political compromise is yet in sight.

4. Ottawa, Canberra, Wellington, Pretoria and Salisbury. Please inform Commonwealth authorities. ~~Four~~ Five Commonwealth High Commissioner's in London have been informed.

5. Delhi, Karachi, Colombo, Accra, Kuala Lumpur. You have discretion to inform Commonwealth Authorities.

SECRETARY OF STATE

5 JUN 1958

Copy: DEF. 5/6/58

CONFIDENTIAL

SECRET

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

58/5474 135

I.9135

Sent: 3rd June, 1958
0103
Rec'd: 4th June, 1958
1230

BD

FROM:

Australian High Commission,
LONDON.

1482. SECRET.

Prime Minister from Harrison.

Selwyn Lloyd, this morning gave me the following brief comments on current events.

1. France. The view of the "professionals" had been that de Gaulle was "likely to make a mess of it ", would not be able to handle the Assembly, would make a bad choice of Ministers, would be aiming at an independent France even if necessary through French withdrawal from N.A.T.O. and would base his views of Russia on the immediate Post War period leading to a false estimate of Soviet Policy, and possibly the opening up of independent negotiations. These views however, have now been if not discarded at least suspended The professionals now agree that de Gaulle has been clever in his statements, in his handling of the Assembly and his appointment of Ministers which they considered remarkably good. They also think that de Gaulle's friendly reply to MacMillan seems to show that he has matured considerably since his earlier days. They are therefore marking time in forming their assessment.

2. Algeria. The "professional view "is that it is only the army plus a number of the Muslims who are firmly behind de Gaulle. Most of the European settlers, who are vichyites, are not kindly disposed toward de Gaulle. However if de Gaulle should take Soustelle into his cabinet it might bring the opinion of the European Algerians to his side. If however, he does nothing in this regard, the European Algerians may well oppose him strongly. The Muslim Algerians trust de Gaulle and hope to get assistence for their cause from him .

3. The Lebanon. Lloyd regarded the situation in the Lebanon as bad, though he thought the British and American support for Chamoun had done much good. He thought it would have the effect of preventing the consolidation into a party bloc of the elements hostile to the Lebanese Government.

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS. CONFIDENTIAL

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

136

I. 9187/88/89.

3.

MIN.&DEPT. E.A.
P.M's

5th June, 1958.

CONFIDENTIAL

However, the situation was more complicated than this. Chahab probably felt it was his duty to defend the constitution but not necessarily the Government. The latter had never made up its mind about how to deal with the Opposition. Orders given to Chahab were usually vague and often contradictory. Chahab had probably never been guilty of insubordination but had in most cases had to make his own decision about how to deal with situations as they arose. Further complication was that significant body of Christian opinion, e.g. Maronite Patriarch, was anti-Chamoun and had refused to come out against the Opposition.

5. Over the next few weeks assessment would need to be made of longer term effects of disorders on Lebanon. Moslem-Christian tensions which had always been near surface presented major problem. McClintock believed that preponderance of Moslem opinion was still against incorporation in the U.A.R. however, the Moslems represented little over half the population but the Christians held the majority of key positions in the Government and Armed Services, and were richer element in population. McClintock thought it would be easy to fan Moslem resentments and there was no telling in what camp they might end up. Economic consequences of disorders might also be serious in longer term. Entrepot trade had been seriously affected and it would take time to recover. Lebanon had, in past, been place of refuge for capital scared away from Arab countries. From now on there might well be flight of capital from Lebanon.

6. Security Council consideration of the Lebanon complaint against the U.A.R. had been postponed until 5th June to give the Arab League more time for its consideration of the Lebanon complaint. At Arab League Meeting in Tripoli (Libya), Sudan was canvassing compromise under terms of which Lebanon would withdraw its complaint if U.A.R. would undertake not to make any more radio and newspaper attacks on other Arab countries. Bergus did not think the Sudanese compromise proposal had any chance of acceptance by the U.A.R.

7. Positions of the Arab League countries on the Lebanon complaint appeared to be as follows:-

(a) Iraq and Jordan were strongly supporting Lebanon:

(b) Sudan was privately strongly supporting Lebanon but was inhibited from saying so in Public:

(c) Libya's position was similar to that of Sudan but it was even more inhibited about criticizing U.A.R.:

(d) Saudi Arabia was seeking to be completely neutral:

(e) Yemen was supporting the U.A.R.

8. Bergus doubted whether worthwhile result would emerge from the Arab League consideration of the Lebanese complaint.

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS. CONFIDENTIAL

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

138

I. 9187/88/89.

FEL:MP

Dated: 3rd June, 1958.
2300.
Rec'd: 4th June, 1958.
2047.

(via leased channel) 58/5474

- 5 JUN 1958
P.M.'s DEPARTMENT SECRET REGISTRY

FROM:

Australian Embassy,
WASHINGTON.

890. CONFIDENTIAL

Repeated to Australian Mission to United Nations, New York.

Information copies to London (For External) and Ottawa.

LEBANON.

Our 859.

Following from Bergus (Israel-Lebanon Affairs) on 3rd June.

2. Negotiations reported in our telegram above had broken down. There had been fresh outbreak of violence in Tripoli over the weekend but the situation there had since quietened again. Fighting was reported in the Bekaa Valley but this should not be regarded too seriously. It was tribal area and the Government's writ had never been firmly maintained in this part of Lebanon.

3. Assessment received from United States Ambassador (McClintock) last night was that there now appeared to be every hope that disorders would peter out and that the Government would not have to make any concessions. It was unlikely that Chamoun would be able to run for Presidency again but as the September Elections approached the Opposition would split up. There was likely to be further incidents and violence but McClintock thought that worst was over. He described the latest bomb throwing and other incidents in Beirut as mainly work of "anti-Government thugs" rather than of organised political opposition. Similar irresponsible partisan elements on the Government side might also be expected to continue to cause trouble for a while.

4. Correspondent in 3rd June issue of "New York Times" characterised position in Lebanon as stalemate umpired by General Chahab (Lebanese Chief of Staff). Bergus thought there was element of truth in this. There was mutual lack of confidence between Chuoun and Chahab and latter, although he acted vigorously to deal with disorders, was in politically independent position. Fact that none of opposition leaders had been arrested for their part in instigating disorders had been seized upon by some observers as evidence that the Army had been pulling its punches.

./.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

TELEGRAM

139

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS
To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA

Despatched:

Received:

3. Meanwhile at request of Lebanese Mission to United Nations, Security Council Meeting to hear Lebanese complaint, which had been fixed for 4th June, has been postponed until 5th June.

4. Ottawa, Canberra, Wellington, Pretoria and Salisbury. Please inform Commonwealth authorities. Five Commonwealth High Commissioners in London have been informed.

5. (Delhi, Karachi, Colombo, Accra, Kuala Lumpur) you have discretion to inform Commonwealth authorities.

SECRETARY OF STATE.

CONFIDENTIAL

Dr. Unkle

CONFIDENTIAL

8x

POL.250/1

140

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS

To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA

Despatched: 22.07 hours 4th June, 1958.

Received: 11.20 " 5th June, 1958.

58/5474

11 JUN 1958

ROUTINE

TELEGRAM CIRCULAR W. NO. 398 CONFIDENTIAL

Addressed United Kingdom High Commissioners Ottawa, Canberra, Wellington, Pretoria, Salisbury. Repeated others.

My telegram circular W. No. 394.

L E B A N O N.

At first working session in Benghazi of Arab League to hear Lebanese complaint, which as stated in paragraph 6 of my telegram circular W. No. 394 was held on evening of 2nd June in secret, it is understood that Lebanese Delegation opened with statement of their complaint against United Arab Republic (U.A.R) quoting details of latter's subversive activity. Egyptian delegate replied that charge was nonsense and asked for time in which to study complaints.

2. Two suggestions which have been canvassed in lobbies of Conference are first that as part of any compromise neutral Arab observers should be sent to Lebanon (Sudanese and Libyans are spoken of as choices) and secondly that Egyptian and Lebanese delegates should both withdraw from sessions of Conference. This suggestion is based on Article 5 of Pact of Arab League which states that in cases of this sort, States between whom difference has arisen shall not participate in deliberation and decisions of council. If this procedure were followed it should favour those delegates who want a strong decision against Egypt and should shorten the proceedings. But in any case Conference is not expected to reach any decision before 5th June.

/3.

Pol. Defence - 6/6/58

CONFIDENTIAL

141

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

CM

I.9311

Dated: 5th June, 1958.
1830
Rec'd: 6th June, 1958.
1635
(Transmitted via leased channel)

FROM:

Australian Mission to United Nations,
NEW YORK.

NY392. UNCLASSIFIED.

The Security Council met this afternoon on the Lebanese complaint but adjourned immediately for 24 hours at the request of Lebanon.

2. The President announced that tomorrow there would probably be statements by Lebanon and the United Arab Republic following which the Council would adjourn until Monday.

MIN. & DEPT. E.A.
P.M'S

7th June, 1958.

TOP SECRET

142

POL 250/1

6th June, 1958

I have been asked to let you know, for your personal information, that from conversations which he has had with United States Ambassador in Cairo it would appear that Nasser may be seeking either to do a deal over Lebanon or at least to give that impression to the Americans. His terms would seem to be that Chamoun should be allowed to serve out his term of office on condition that an assurance was given which would have to be underwritten by United States Government that Opposition leaders would be granted an amnesty. Nasser has indicated that without such an assurance he could not press Opposition leaders to accept that Chamoun should complete his period as President. The United States Government have instructed their Ambassador to get word to Nasser that they will not be party to any deal with him respecting Lebanese internal affairs.

I have been asked to say that this information (which is also being given to Mr. Diefenbaker) is of course highly confidential.

(N. PRITCHARD)

THE RT. HON^BLE^ R. G. MENZIES,
C.H., Q.C.,
PRIME MINISTER OF THE
COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA,
CANBERRA.

Copy to Mr Tange
SJB 6/6

TOP SECRET

143

POL 250/1

The Secretary,
Prime Minister's Department,
Canberra.

With the compliments of the

High Commissioner
for the
United Kingdom

E.S.b 19/6

58/5474

6 - JUN 1958
SECRETARY'S OFFICE
P.M'S. DEPARTMENT

Office of the High Commissioner
for the United Kingdom,
Canberra, A.C.T.

6th June, 1958

AsB 9/6

to Secretary

144

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS CONFIDENTIAL

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

58/5474

HB

I.9377

Dated: 6th June, 1958.
2245
Rec'd: 7th June, 1958.
1704

FROM:

(via leased channel)

Australian Mission to the United Nations,
NEW YORK.

NY.399 CONFIDENTIAL

Repeated Washington for information.

Ottawa savingram 51.

London for External cable 37.

From Walker.

Security Council Lebanon.

Dixon told me that the United Kingdom and the United States view the situation as considerably more serious than would appear from their statements in the Council today. Nothing less than the future independence of Lebanon is at stake. He said he was sure you would have been confidentially informed of London's views on this.

MIN. DEPT. E.A.
P.M's.

8th June, 1958.

CONFIDENTIAL

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

He suggested the Council adjourn until Tuesday. Dixon said the United Kingdom Delegation felt grave disquiet at Malik's evidence of U.A.R. intervention and was concerned at the threat to Lebanon's independence. The rather general reply by Egypt had not dispelled this disquiet. He supported Jamali's motion for adjournment and suggested Iraq would give the Council a report on the Arab League proceedings. Barco (United States) said the United States was "gravely concerned" about the situation as set out by Malik. The United States supported an adjournment until Tuesday. France supported the United Kingdom and United States.

Sobolev (U.S.S.R.) said Malik had failed to prove his case that the U.A.R. was interfering in Lebanon. The Lebanese Government was using an internal situation to make charges against the U.A.R. Responsibility for the situation lay also with "certain circles" which did not want a reduction of tension in the area.

Other members of the Council made short statements supporting an adjournment. Malik made a further statement in which he objected to Loutfi's references to the internal affairs of Lebanon as an infringement of Article 2(7). Loutfi replied briefly.

The Council adjourned until Tuesday afternoon.

MIN. & DEPT. E.A.
P.M.'S.

8th June, 1958.

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

58/5474

:ABK. I.9419.

Dated: 6th June, 1958.
1830.

FROM: Rec'd: 8th June, 1958.
1016.

Australian Mission to the United Nations, NEW YORK. (Transmitted via leased channel)

398. UNCLASSIFIED.

Repeated Washington for Information.

Security Council - Lebanon.

Malik said Lebanon had delayed the presentation of its case to the Council to give the Arab League an opportunity to consider its complaint. The League had not come to any conclusion and as events, the subject of the complaint, had increased in intensity, Malik felt bound to bring the matter before the Council. Lebanon's case, Malik states, is:-

(A) That the U.A.R. has been and still is engaged in massive, illegal and unprovoked intervention in the affairs of Lebanon.

(B) This intervention aimed at undermining an d, in fact, threatens Lebanese independence.

(C) The situation created by the intervention which threatens the independence of Lebanon is likely, if it continues, to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security. In support of these claims he gave detailed evidence of the following points:-

(1) Large scale arms supply from the U.A.R. to "subversive elements" in Lebanon.

(2) Training in subversion on the territory of the U.A.R. of elements from Lebanon.

(3) Participation of U.A.R. civilians in subversion in Lebanon.

(4) Participation of U.A.R. "Government elements" in terrorist activities. (5) and (6) press and radio campaign by the U.A.R. against the Government of Lebanon.

In conclusion, he said Lebanon's only sin was its co-operation and friendship with the Western world. The complaint was a proper matter to bring before the Council and he called on th e Council to bring its wisdom to play to remove the threat and put an end to the U.A.R. intervention.

Loutfi said the Lebanese Government was attempting to divert attention from the internal situation in Lebanon by giving it an international aspect. The objective of the complaint was to use the Security Council to solve internal issues.

Matsudaira (Japan) suggested the Council adjourn until it could receive the report of the Arab League. Jamali (Iraq) said he had received authoritative information that the League could not agree and there was no ground for delaying the debate.

147

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

SECRET

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

CM:ABK.

I.9390. 58/5474

Dated: 7th June, 1958.
1750.

FROM:

Rec'd: 8th June, 1958.
0900.

Australian High Commission,
LONDON.

1538. SECRET.

Repeated New York 55.

From External.

Lebanon.

Reference New York's 399 of 6th June. I talked to Rose, Head of Levant Department, Foreign Office, this morning who commented as follows.

1. Dixon's comment appeared slightly alarmist.

2. Middleton's assessment of the security situation is in brief that the Lebanese Government has control of the main towns. The army is insufficient in size to control towns and countryside. Country particularly near the Syrian border therefore still in the hands of the Opposition. Furthermore military equipment still coming in from Syria and security situation therefore is continuing to deteriorate.

3. Rose said his personal view of the political situation is that basically it should be reasonably easily capable of solution but personalities were preventing this, e.g. Chamoun was widely disliked, Sami Solh was far from popular and the Army Commander was not evidencing strength and refusing to take a leading political role. The longer the political and security situation was unsolved the worse the division between Christian and Arab was likely to become. There was a danger if not solved soon that permanent division would occur with possible civil war. The State depended on a delicate balance between religious elements as did the Army. A further danger was that many Lebanese were afraid to stand out strongly against Nasser.

4. Will forward further details on Monday.

MIN. & DEPT. E.A.
P.M.'S.

8th June, 1958.

SECRET

148

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS.
To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA.

Despatched:

Received:

spinning out Conference in order to delay debate on Lebanese complaint in Security Council or if Lebanese go forward in Security Council before Arab League Conference is finished, to weaken their case. Lebanese have shown some uncertainty as to what course to adopt in face of these tactics. Their reaction so far has been to ask for Security Council ~~date~~ debate to be put back in hope that Arab League meeting might reach ~~completion~~ conclusion. But they cannot continue this indefinitely and delay may damage their case in Security Council. We have assured Lebanese of our full support in Council whatever course they decide to adopt there and have done our utmost to rally support from other members.

4. You have discretion to inform Commonwealth authorities in strict confidence.

SECRETARY OF STATE.

TOP SECRET

149

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS.
To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA.

Despatched: 23.00 hours 6.6.58

Received: 08.30 hours 7.6.58

TELEGRAM NO. 850 TOP SECRET PRIORITY

Addressed: Ottawa, 878, Canberra 850.

My W.404.

LEBANON.

Security position appears to have reached state approximating to stalemate. Army continues to contain the insurgents but Chehab seems unwilling to mount a major offensive against them possibly for fear of accentuating religious divisions. Unless there is further substantial United Arab Republic intervention it seems that Government forces can probably hold situation at least for time being. Mere prolongation of emergency, however, carries risk of Christian-Moslem split within Army. But dissidents, though they continue to be whipped on by propaganda from the United Arab Republic, may, unless reinforced from outside also be reaching their limit. And there are signs of growing general weariness among Lebanese of hardships and violence of rebellion and of the interruption which it entails to commerce and the tourist trade and of wish to return to normal life. This may work in favour of Chamoun and established Government.

2. In these circumstances there is some hope that Lebanon situation may eventually resolve itself in a not too unsatisfactory way. This, however, depends upon the action of the United Arab Republic. Meanwhile we and Americans maintain our readiness to deal with any contingency.

3. Developments in Arab League Conference at Benghazi and in Security Council are confused. Lebanese aim at Arab League Conference has been to obtain strong condemnation of United Arab Republic interference and subversion and undertaking that it would cease. In this they have support of Iraq and Jordan. The United Arab Republic and the Yemen have, however, resisted. There has been some talk of a compromise resolution which has satisfied neither side. At present time chance of Conference reaching agreement does not seem [illegible]. It may be that the United Arab Republic [illegible]

/spinning

Pol.
Defence.
9/6/58
My 58/5474 of
May 20 refers

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

150

OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER
FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM
CANBERRA

TELEPHONE: CANBERRA U2211

POL.250/1

58/5474.

- 9 JUN 1958
P.M.'S DEPARTMENT
SECRET REGISTRY

9th June, 1958.

Dear Unkles,

I enclose a copy of Commonwealth Relations Office telegram No. 850 to Canberra about the Lebanon.

In view of the nature of the telegram I should be grateful if you would arrange for it to be treated in the same way as other particularly secret reports which have been sent to you.

A copy of this letter and of the enclosure is being sent to Kevin in the Department of External Affairs.

Yours sincerely

WJC

(W. J. Coe)

G. UNKLES, ESQ.
PRIME MINISTER'S DEPARTMENT,
CANBERRA.

TOP SECRET

Copy to:-

C.R.O.

P.S. to Secretary of State (2)
Sir H. Lintott
Mr. James
Mr. Costar
Mr. Moon

H.M. Ambassador for U.K. in Dublin
U.K. Embassy Washington Mr. J.R.A. Bottomley
U.K. Mission to U.N.
New York Mr. T.W. Keeble
U.K. High Commissioner in Ottawa (6)
U.K. High Commissioner in Canberra (6)
U.K. High Commissioner in Wellington (4)

Copies sent to High Commissioners for Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Federal High Commissioner in London, omitting paragraphs 4, 5 and 6.

MIDDLE EAST DEPT.

SECRET

Outward Telegram from Commonwealth Relations Office

151

TO: U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER IN SOUTH AFRICA
U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER IN INDIA
U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER IN PAKISTAN (ACTING)
U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER IN CEYLON
U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER IN GHANA
U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER IN THE FEDERATION OF MALAYA
U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER IN THE FEDERATION OF RHODESIA AND NYASALAND

RPTD: U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER IN CANADA
U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER IN AUSTRALIA
U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER IN NEW ZEALAND
(BY AIR MAIL)

(Sent 21.40 hours 27th May, 1958)

CYPHER
PRIORITY

W. No. 378 SECRET

Repeated Air Mail to U.K. High Commissioners in Ottawa, Canberra and Wellington.

My W. No. 370.

LEBANON

Situation as at 27th May

Bomb incidents have continued in Beirut and there have been clashes elsewhere between Government forces and dissidents, notably in the North East.

2. There continue to be signs of a detente on the political front. It is now generally believed that President Chamoun will not attempt to seek re-election.

3. It has been officially announced in Khartoum that a meeting of the Arab League will be held in Tripoli (Libya) to hear the Lebanon's complaint against the United Arab Republic. It is still not clear whether the Lebanon will delay action in the Security Council until after the Arab League meeting.

(To Pretoria, Karachi, Salisbury)

4. Please inform Commonwealth authorities. High Commissioners in London informed.

(To Delhi, Colombo, Accra Kuala Lumpur)

5. Please inform Commonwealth authorities.

(To Ottawa, Canberra, Wellington)

6. Commonwealth Governments will have had fuller reports through you, but since these have not been copied to High Commissioners in London this report is being passed to them.

/NOTE:

SECRET

Copy to:-

C.R.O.

P.S. to Secretary of State (2)
Sir H. Lintott
Mr. James
Mr. Costar
Mr. Moon

H.M. Ambassador for U.K. in Dublin
U.K. Embassy Washington Mr. J.R.A. Bottomley
U.K. Mission to U.N. New York Mr. T.W. Keeble
U.K. High Commissioner in Ottawa (6)
U.K. High Commissioner in Canberra (6)
U.K. High Commissioner in Wellington (4)

Copies sent to High Commissioners for Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Federal High Commissioner in London, omitting paragraphs 4, 5 and 6.

MIDDLE EAST DEPT.

152

Outward Telegram from Commonwealth Relations Office

TO: U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER IN SOUTH AFRICA
U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER IN INDIA
U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER IN PAKISTAN (ACTING)
U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER IN CEYLON
U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER IN GHANA
U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER IN THE FEDERATION OF MALAYA
U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER IN THE FEDERATION OF RHODESIA AND NYASALAND

RPTD: U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER IN CANADA
U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER IN AUSTRALIA
U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER IN NEW ZEALAND
(BY AIR MAIL)

(Sent 21.40 hours 27th May, 1958)

CYPHER
PRIORITY

W. No. 378 SECRET

Repeated Air Mail to U.K. High Commissioners in Ottawa, Canberra and Wellington.

My W. No. 370.

L E B A N O N

Situation as at 27th May

Bomb incidents have continued in Beirut and there have been clashes elsewhere between Government forces and dissidents, notably in the North East.

2. There continue to be signs of a detente on the political front. It is now generally believed that President Chamoun will not attempt to seek re-election.

3. It has been officially announced in Khartoum that a meeting of the Arab League will be held in Tripoli (Libya) to hear the Lebanon's complaint against the United Arab Republic. It is still not clear whether the Lebanon will delay action in the Security Council until after the Arab League meeting.

(To Pretoria, Karachi, Salisbury)

4. Please inform Commonwealth authorities. High Commissioners in London informed.

(To Delhi, Colombo, Accra Kuala Lumpur)

5. Please inform Commonwealth authorities.

(To Ottawa, Canberra, Wellington)

6. Commonwealth Governments will have had fuller reports through you, but since these have not been copied to High Commissioners in London this report is being passed to them.

/NOTE:

(To Pretoria, Karachi, Salisbury)

5. Please inform Commonwealth authorities. High Commissioners in London informed.

(To Delhi, Colombo, Accra, Kuala Lumpur)

6. Please inform Commonwealth authorities.

(To Ottawa, Canberra, Wellington)

7. Copies have been passed to High Commissioners in London. Commonwealth Governments will have had fuller reports through you.

Copy to:-

C.R.O.

P.S. to Secretary of State (2)
Sir G. Laithwaite
Sir H. Lintott
Mr. James
Mr. Costar
Mr. Morrison
Mr. Moon

H.M. Ambassador for U.K. in Dublin
U.K. Embassy Washington Mr. J.R.A. Bottomley
U.K. Mission to U.N. New York Mr. T.W. Keeble

U.K. High Commissioner in Ottawa (6)
U.K. High Commissioner in Canberra (6)
U.K. High Commissioner in Wellington (4)

Copies sent to High Commissioners for Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Federal High Commissioner in London, omitting paragraphs 5, 6 and 7.

MIDDLE EAST DEPT.

151

SECRET

Outward Telegram from Commonwealth Relations Office

TO: U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER IN SOUTH AFRICA
U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER IN INDIA
U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER IN PAKISTAN (ACTING)
U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER IN CEYLON
U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER IN GHANA
U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER IN THE FEDERATION OF MALAYA
U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER IN THE FEDERATION OF RHODESIA AND NYASALAND

RPTD: U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER IN CANADA
U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER IN AUSTRALIA
U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER IN NEW ZEALAND
(BY AIR MAIL)

(Sent 23.03 hours 28th May 1958)

CYPHER
PRIORITY

W. No. 381 SECRET

Repeated Air Mail to U.K. High Commissioners in Ottawa, Canberra and Wellington.

My W. No. 378.

LEBANON

Yesterday afternoon, after inscription of Lebanese complaint on agenda Security Council agreed to adjourn and meet again on 3rd June, unless Lebanese representative informed President that complaint had been satisfactorily settled in Arab League and that he did not wish for a meeting. This procedure was in accordance with wishes of Lebanese Government.

2. Lebanese Council of Ministers announced yesterday that

(a) no amendment to Constitution would be presented to Chamber of Deputies; and

(b) no extraordinary session of Chamber would be called to consider amendment to Constitution. (Ordinary session ends on 31st May.)

3. Implication of this is that Cabinet will refuse to permit Constitution to be modified to enable President to stand for re-election. It seems unlikely, however, that this concession will now satisfy those elements of opposition who continue to demand President's immediate resignation.

4. We believe that insurgent forces continue to receive arms, ammunition and personnel reinforcements from U.A.R. According to Cairo Radio, Saeb Salam, extreme opposition leader, has said that, if Lebanese Government "use" Citizens' Auxiliary Security Force (which Government have announced plans to form), opposition will call on the U.A.R. for "volunteers".

(To Pretoria/

(To Pretoria, Karachi, Salisbury)

5. Please inform Commonwealth authorities. High Commissioners in London informed.

(To Delhi, Colombo, Accra, Kuala Lumpur)

6. Please inform Commonwealth authorities.

(To Ottawa, Canberra, Wellington)

7. Copies have been passed to High Commissioners in London. Commonwealth Governments will have had fuller reports through you.

Copy to:-

C.R.O.

P.S. to Secretary of State (2)
Sir G. Laithwaite
Sir H. Lintott
Mr. James
Mr. Costar
Mr. Morrison
Mr. Moon

H.M. Ambassador for U.K. in Dublin
U.K. Embassy Washington Mr. J.R.A. Bottomley
U.K. Mission to U.N. New York Mr. T.W. Keeble

U.K. High Commissioner in Ottawa (6)
U.K. High Commissioner in Canberra (6)
U.K. High Commissioner in Wellington (4)

Copies sent to High Commissioners for Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Federal High Commissioner in London, omitting paragraphs 5, 6 and 7.

MIDDLE EAST DEPT.

153

Outward Telegram from Commonwealth Relations Office

TO: U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER IN SOUTH AFRICA
U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER IN INDIA
U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER IN PAKISTAN (ACTING)
U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER IN CEYLON
U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER IN GHANA
U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER IN THE FEDERATION OF MALAYA
U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER IN THE FEDERATION OF RHODESIA AND NYASALAND

RPTD: U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER IN CANADA)
U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER IN AUSTRALIA)(BY AIR MAIL)
U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER IN NEW ZEALAND)

(Sent 23.03 hours 28th May 1958)

CYPHER
PRIORITY

W. No. 381 SECRET

Repeated Air Mail to U.K. High Commissioners in Ottawa, Canberra and Wellington.

My W. No. 378.

L E B A N O N

Yesterday afternoon, after inscription of Lebanese complaint on agenda Security Council agreed to adjourn and meet again on 3rd June, unless Lebanese representative informed President that complaint had been satisfactorily settled in Arab League and that he did not wish for a meeting. This procedure was in accordance with wishes of Lebanese Government.

2. Lebanese Council of Ministers announced yesterday that

(a) no amendment to Constitution would be presented to Chamber of Deputies; and

(b) no extraordinary session of Chamber would be called to consider amendment to Constitution. (Ordinary session ends on 31st May.)

3. Implication of this is that Cabinet will refuse to permit Constitution to be modified to enable President to stand for re-election. It seems unlikely, however, that this concession will now satisfy those elements of opposition who continue to demand President's immediate resignation.

4. We believe that insurgent forces continue to receive arms, ammunition and personnel reinforcements from U.A.R. According to Cairo Radio, Saeb Salam, extreme opposition leader, has said that, if Lebanese Government "use" Citizens' Auxiliary Security Force (which Government have announced plans to form), opposition will call on the U.A.R. for "volunteers".

(To Pretoria/

SECRET SECRET.

154

G. Unkles, Esq.,
Prime Minister's Department,
CANBERRA. A.C.T.

With the Compliments

of the

Official Secretary

Encl: 2 copies each of telegrams
Circular W. Nos. 378 and 381.
"LEBANON".

Office of the High Commissioner
for the United Kingdom,
Canberra, A.C.T.

SECRET

9th June, 1958.

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

155

SECRET

I.9594

Sent: 10th June, 1958
2022
Rec'd: 11th June, 1958
0830

ABK/BD

58/5474
12 JUN 1958
P.M.'S. DEPARTMENT SECRET REGISTRY

FROM:

Australian High Commission,
LONDON.

1564. SECRET.

Addressed Canberra 1564, repeated New York 56.

From External.

Lebanon. My 1538.

It appears from evidence available to us, including Foreign Office telegrams that the United Kingdom regard the position in Lebanon as more serious than the United States.

2. A report from the United Kingdom Mission Benghazi states that in the Arab League meeting the Lebanese based rejection of compromise on the absence of any condemnation of U.A.R. Iraqi and Jordanian Delegates said that in view of this they could no longer support the proposed resolution. Libyan and Sudanese Delegates stressed regret that the effort to reach compromise had failed. The Saudi Arabian Delegate had nothing to say.

3. The United Kingdom Mission Amman reports that the Jordan Delegate at the Arab League had been at first disposed to accept compromise, but King Hussein and Samir felt strongly that it should be rejected since evidence of U.A.R. intervention was clear and if it was allowed to succeed in Lebanon Iraq and Jordan would be the next on the list.

MIN. & DEPT. E.A.
P.M'S. 11th June, 1958

SECRET

156

CONFIDENTIAL

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS
To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA

Despatched:

Received:

will seek to provide Security Council with report of proceedings at Benghazi. Iraqi representative however himself informed Council that he did not think much would be gained from such a report. It is in fact understood that no record of Arab League proceedings is kept. For evidence of paralysis of Arab League it may therefore be necessary to rely on absence of any such agreed report.

7. Within Lebanon the situation is generally quiet. On 6th June there was however heavy fighting between Army and insurgents in Tripoli and I.P.C. workers are experiencing great difficulty in getting to work.

8. On 7th June Speaker of Lebanon Chamber of Deputies convoked a meeting for express purpose of electing new president on 24th July which is the earliest date for such an election permitted by constitution. It appears that President had not been consulted beforehand.

9. The Mufti of the Lebanon has made a strong attack on the Prime Minister Sami Solh accusing him of ruling a country that hates him and causing spilling of innocent blood.

10. Ottawa, Canberra, Wellington, Pretoria. Please inform Commonwealth authorities. Four Commonwealth High Commissioners in London have been informed. Salisbury take similar action.

11. (Delhi, Karachi, Colombo, Accra, Kuala Lumpur). You have discretion to inform Commonwealth authorities.

SECRETARY OF STATE.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

157

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS

To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA

Despatched:

Received:

3. In reply U.A.R. representative denied charges of interference by U.A.R. in Lebanon affairs. Troubles in Lebanon were purely an internal Lebanese affair. Decision to bring them to Security Council was an attempt to mislead public opinion. At Arab League meeting in Benghazi U.A.R. had presented a resolution to solve problem amicably which had been rejected by Lebanese Government. He would refer in his next statement to Article 36(2) of the Charter which provides that Council should take into consideration any procedures for settlement which have already been adopted by the parties. U.A.R. itself could he claimed have put in a counter-complaint about expulsion from Lebanon of U.A.R. nationals in recent months but had refrained.

4. Russian representative said he was unconvinced by Dr. Malik's case. Lebanese Government was not in earnest in claim that they wanted peaceful solution since they had made no attempt to solve question bilaterally with U.A.R. Government but had put their complaint simultaneously to Arab League and Security Council. Lebanese Government alone had rejected resolution adopted unanimously by Arab League for peaceful solution. (Iraqi representative intervened to deny this and said that Governments of Iraq and Jordan also had not supported U.A.R. resolution at Benghazi).

5. United Kingdom representative expressed disquiet at situation revealed by Dr. Malik and substantiated by wealth of ascertainable fact and supported proposal by Iraqi delegate that Council should adjourn for few days to consider the matter.

6. Meeting was adjourned until 10th June. Meanwhile following a proposal by Japanese representative supported by Colombian and Panamanian representatives Iraqi representative

CONFIDENTIAL

/will

CONFIDENTIAL POL.250/1.

158

TELEGRAM 'S'

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS

To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA

Despatched: 13.38 hours 10th June, 1958.

Received: 08.30 hours 11th June, 1958.

TELEGRAM CIRCULAR W. NO. 410. CONFIDENTIAL.

Repeated United Kingdom High Commissioners, Delhi, Karachi, Colombo, Accra, Kuala Lumpur.

My Telegram Circular W. No. 404.

LEBANON.

Arab League Conference at Benghazi ended on 6th June without reaching any conclusion. A compromise resolution was it is understood put forward on 4th June calling for the stopping of any activities which disturbed relations between member states of the Arab League, the withdrawal by the Lebanon of her complaint to the Security Council and the despatch of a mission by the Arab League to the Lebanon to settle existing differences. This resolution which failed to make any direct reference to the U.A.R. was rejected by the Lebanese Government and also by the Iraqi and Jordanian Governments. It is also reported that the U.A.R. (United Arab Republic) and Yemeni delegations were unable to accept it or to make any counter-proposal which was acceptable to other delegates.

2. The Security Council met on the 8th June to hear the Lebanese complaint. Dr. Malik spoke cogently and effectively. After describing the failure of Lebanon's attempt to secure a settlement either directly with U.A.R. or through Arab League he set out Lebanese case at length with much detailed evidence. He concluded that Lebanon was only anxious that intervention in all its aspects should stop that Lebanon should be allowed to solve her internal problems in peace and that best possible relations should exist between Lebanon and U.A.R. He left it to wisdom of Security Council to decide how this could be achieved.

CONFIDENTIAL /3.

CONFIDENTIAL

159

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS

To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA

Despatched:

Received:

will seek to provide Security Council with report of proceedings at Benghazi. Iraqi representative however himself informed Council that he did not think much would be gained from such a report. It is in fact understood that no record of Arab League proceedings is kept. For evidence of paralysis of Arab League it may therefore be necessary to rely on absence of any such agreed report.

7. Within Lebanon the situation is generally quiet. On 6th June there was however heavy fighting between Army and insurgents in Tripoli and I.P.C. workers are experiencing great difficulty in getting to work.

8. On 7th June Speaker of Lebanon Chamber of Deputies convoked a meeting for express purpose of electing new president on 24th July which is the earliest date for such an election permitted by constitution. It appears that President had not been consulted beforehand.

9. The Mufti of the Lebanon has made a strong attack on the Prime Minister Sami Solh accusing him of ruling a country that hates him and causing spilling of innocent blood.

10. Ottawa, Canberra, Wellington, Pretoria. Please inform Commonwealth authorities. Four Commonwealth High Commissioners in London have been informed. Salisbury take similar action.

11. (Delhi, Karachi, Colombo, Accra, Kuala Lumpur). You have discretion to inform Commonwealth authorities.

<u>SECRETARY OF STATE</u>.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

160

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS

To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA

Despatched:

Received:

3. In reply U.A.R. representative denied charges of interference by U.A.R. in Lebanon affairs. Troubles in Lebanon were purely an internal Lebanese affair. Decision to bring them to Security Council was an attempt to mislead public opinion. At Arab League meeting in Benghazi U.A.R. had presented a resolution to solve problem amicably which had been rejected by Lebanese Government. He would refer in his next statement to Article 36(2) of the Charter which provides that Council should take into consideration any procedures for settlement which have already been adopted by the parties. U.A.R. itself could he claimed have put in a counter-complaint about expulsion from Lebanon of U.A.R. nationals in recent months but had refrained.

4. Russian representative said he was unconvinced by Dr. Malik's case. Lebanese Government was not in earnest in claim that they wanted peaceful solution since they had made no attempt to solve question bilaterally with U.A.R. Government but had put their complaint simultaneously to Arab League and Security Council. Lebanese Government alone had rejected resolution adopted unanimously by Arab League for peaceful solution. (Iraqi representative intervened to deny this and said that Governments of Iraq and Jordan also had not supported U.A.R. resolution at Benghazi).

5. United Kingdom representative expressed disquiet at situation revealed by Dr. Malik and substantiated by wealth of ascertainable fact and supported proposal by Iraqi delegate that Council should adjourn for few days to consider the matter.

6. Meeting was adjourned until 10th June. Meanwhile following a proposal by Japanese representative supported by Colombian and Panamanian representatives Iraqi representative

/will

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL POL.250/1.

Mr Unkles 161
nothing new in this
P.A.

TELEGRAM

'S'

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS

To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA

Despatched: 13.38 hours 10th June, 1958.

Received: 08.30 hours 11th June, 1958.

58/5474

TELEGRAM CIRCULAR W. NO. 410. CONFIDENTIAL.

Repeated United Kingdom High Commissioners, Delhi, Karachi, Colombo, Accra, Kuala Lumpur.

My Telegram Circular W. No. 404.

LEBANON.

Arab League Conference at Benghazi ended on 6th June without reaching any conclusion. A compromise resolution was it is understood put forward on 4th June calling for the stopping of any activities which disturbed relations between member states of the Arab League, the withdrawal by the Lebanon of her complaint to the Security Council and the despatch of a mission by the Arab League to the Lebanon to settle existing differences. This resolution which failed to make any direct reference to the U.A.R. was rejected by the Lebanese Government and also by the Iraqi and Jordanian Governments. It is also reported that the U.A.R. (United Arab Republic) and Yemeni delegations were unable to accept it or to make any counter-proposal which was acceptable to other delegates.

2. The Security Council met on the 8th June to hear the Lebanese complaint. Dr. Malik spoke cogently and effectively. After describing the failure of Lebanon's attempt to secure a settlement either directly with U.A.R. or through Arab League he set out Lebanese case at length with much detailed evidence. He concluded that Lebanon was only anxious that intervention in all its aspects should stop that Lebanon should be allowed to solve her internal problems in peace and that best possible relations should exist between Lebanon and U.A.R. He left it to wisdom of Security Council to decide how this could be achieved.

/3.

CONFIDENTIAL

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

162

58/5474

MMc

I.9624

Dated: 10th June 1958 1930

Rec'd: 11th June 1958 1407

(Transmitted via leased channel.)

FROM:

Australian Mission to the United Nations,
N E W   Y O R K.

NY.411. UNCLASSIFIED. PRIORITY.

Security Council - Lebanon.

Reference our 410.

When the Council resumed Sweden introduced a draft resolution for the immediate despatch of an observation Mission to the borders of Lebanon to ensure against infiltration of men and arms from neighbouring countries.

The United Kingdom and United States supported the Swedish proposal and the Council then suspended proceedings for an hour and a half. On resumption Sobolev will be the first speaker.

MIN. & DEPT. E.A.
P.M.'s.

11th June, 1958.

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

I.9652/3

5. Outcome of United Nations Security Council consideration could have considerable impact onthe Government's position. It was perhaps for this reason that Malik was speaking in terms of protracted debate and had not yet made up his mind as to what sort of resolution he wanted. (In this connection Wahl mentioned that United States Delegation had been canvassing with the State Department idea of some international inspection system on Lebanese border as means of checking U.A.R. assistance to Dissidents in Lebanon).

6. Lebanese commerce was in difficulty and banks were having considerable trouble in meeting withdrawals. Farmers faced heavy losses because of drought but also because they could not get their crops to market. No difficulties had so far been experienced, however, so far as food supplies were concerned. Food was reaching cities despite disorders and certain amount of banditry on roads.

MIN. & DEPT. E.A.
P.M'S

12th June, 1958.

164

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS. CONFIDENTIAL

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

DB:CM

I.9652/3

Dated: 10th June, 1958. 2235
Rec'd: 11th June, 1958. 1933
(Transmitted via leased channel)

FROM:

Australian Embassy,
WASHINGTON.

58/5474
13 JUN 1958

938. CONFIDENTIAL.

Repeated to New York (information copies to London and Ottawa).

Lebanon.

Our 890.

Following from Wahl (Israel-Lebanon Affairs) on 10th June.

2. Over last few days the United States Embassy, Beirut, had reversed its assessment of early last week that disorders would peter out. All recent evidence suggested opposition forces were becoming stronger and were receiving increasing quantity of arms including such items as mortars and bazookas. Lebanese airforce over the weekend claimed to have attacked mule convoys bringing in arms presumably from Syria into Bekaa Valley.

3. Main concentrations of opposition strength were in vicinity of Tripoli and Hermil and Rachaya areas, all of which were close to the Syrian border. Only concentration of opposition strength not close to border was in Shouf area and Moslem quarter of Beirut. In these areas the government exercised no control at all. There was at this stage military stalemate with activity developing only when one or other side attempted to encroach on territory at present held by other. Only consolation about present military picture was that opposition activities were as yet unco-ordinated.

4. Political situation in Leban was highly confused. Shia in South were thought to be sitting on fence waiting to see which was going to be winning side. This was also true of great many of the politicians and was one of the reasons why the Lebanese parliament had had great difficulty in getting quorum since trouble began. Widespread fear among moderate elements of setting off religious war also affected support government was receiving as well as actions of latter and army in dealing with situation. When Ullamas had excommunicated Prime Minister (Sami Ex-Solh) for being tool of Christians, it had been feared that this might trigger religious war. However, statement by the Maronite Patriarch against Chamoun, although it was unfortunate, had nevertheless helped to keep religious issue from coming to forefront. Extremist christian and Moslem groups were itching for excuse to fight each other but had so far felt restrained from doing so.

CONFIDENTIAL

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

58/5474

17 JUN 1958

CM

I.9776

Dated: 10th June, 1958.
1830
Rec'd: 12th June, 1958.
1959
(Transmitted via leased channel)

FROM:

Australian Mission to United Nations,
NEW YORK.

NY410. UNCLASSIFIED.

Security Council-Lebanon.

Loutfi replied to Malik's statement of last Friday and in some detail rejected the Lebanese charges of U.A.R. interference. According to his information, the Arab league had unanimously adopted the resolution expressing confidence that the U.A.R. was not interfering in Lebanon but Lebanon had rejected it, proving its unfriendly attitude to the U.A.R. Malik said he had just been in communication with Beirut and wished to inform the Council that in the last 24 hours the situation had become "very serious" and he requested the Council to sit continuously until it took some decision. He then replied to Loutfi and said that the Arab league had not adopted any resolution, contrary to Loutfi's claim. Jarring said he intended to introduce draft resolution concerning the possibility of some arrangement of investigation or observation of the Lebanese complaint. On the United States motion the Council, suspended proceedings for an hour until the Swedish draft could be produced. The remainder of debate follows.

MIN. & DEPT. E.A.
P.M'S

13th June, 1958.

CONFIDENTIAL

166

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS

To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA

Despatched:

Received:

in favour of violence against the ordinary population and constitutional authority. (Full text of speech follows by bag).

4. Debate was adjourned until 11th June. At close apart from some uncertainty about Panama all members of Council except Soviet Union were ready to vote for Swedish resolution. Soviet representative had let it be known that if resolution was pressed to vote immediately he would be obliged to veto it. He was however consulting Moscow.

5. Ottawa, Canberra, Wellington, Pretoria. Please inform Commonwealth authorities. High Commissioners in London informed. Salisbury take similar action.

SECRETARY OF STATE.

CONFIDENTIAL.

 POL.250/1.

167

'S'

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS
To: THE Acting HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA

Despatched: 22.50 hours 11th June, 1958.
Received: 11.30 hours 12th June, 1958.

TELEGRAM CIRCULAR W. NO. 414. CONFIDENTIAL.

Addressed United Kingdom High Commissioners, Ottawa, Canberra, Wellington, Pretoria, Salisbury, repeated other posts.

My Telegram Circular W. No. 410.

LEBANON.

At Security Council meeting on 10th June Swedish representative put forward resolution calling for the despatch of an observation group to borders of Lebanon to ensure that there is no illegal infiltration of personnel or supply of arms or other material across Lebanese borders. American and United Kingdom representatives both spoke in support of resolution.

2. In light of Swedish resolution neither we nor Americans proposed to speak further on the substance of the Lebanese complaint. Swedish representative had in fact indicated before Council met that his resolution was put forward on understanding that we would abstain from making controversial statements in support of Lebanon unless forced to do so by provocative Soviet speech or Soviet veto on the resolution. In the event the Russian representative delivered a strong attack on Lebanon Government and Western powers during which he described Dr. Malik as spokesman of ruling circles in England and United States.

3. The United States representative thereupon spoke firmly. He said that there was clear evidence of interference from U.A.R. (United Arab Republic) in Lebanon creating a grave situation which Council could not ignore. United Nations could not deny Lebanon protection which it had extended to Egypt in 1956. United States was determined to defend independence of Lebanon. The United Kingdom representative followed drawing attention to the evidence which had been produced of U.A.R. interference in the Lebanon and emphasising the disturbing nature of situation in which constitutional opposition was being incited from outside the country to abandon constitutional methods

/in favour

CONFIDENTIAL

168

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS

To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA

Despatched:

-2-

Received:

in favour of violence against the ordinary population and constitutional authority. (Full text of speech follows by bag).

4. Debate was adjourned until 11th June. At close apart from some uncertainty about Panama all members of Council except Soviet Union were ready to vote for Swedish resolution. Soviet representative had let it be known that if resolution was pressed to vote immediately he would be obliged to veto it. He was however consulting Moscow.

5. Ottawa, Canberra, Wellington, Pretoria. Please inform Commonwealth authorities. High Commissioners in London informed. Salisbury take similar action.

SECRETARY OF STATE.

CONFIDENTIAL

Mr Unkles

POL.250/1.

169

CONFIDENTIAL

TELEGRAM

'S'

58/5474

13 JUN 1958

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS

To: THE Acting HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA

Despatched: 22.50 hours 11th June, 1958.

Received: 11.30 hours 12th June, 1958.

TELEGRAM CIRCULAR W. NO. 414. CONFIDENTIAL.

Addressed United Kingdom High Commissioners, Ottawa, Canberra, Wellington, Pretoria, Salisbury, repeated other posts.

My Telegram Circular W. No. 410.

LEBANON.

At Security Council meeting on 10th June Swedish representative put forward resolution calling for the despatch of an observation group to borders of Lebanon to ensure that there is no illegal infiltration of personnel or supply of arms or other material across Lebanese borders. American and United Kingdom representatives both spoke in support of resolution.

2. In light of Swedish resolution neither we nor Americans proposed to speak further on the substance of the Lebanese complaint. Swedish representative had in fact indicated before Council met that his resolution was put forward on understanding that we would abstain from making controversial statements in support of Lebanon unless forced to do so by provocative Soviet speech or Soviet veto on the resolution. In the event the Russian representative delivered a strong attack on Lebanon Government and Western powers during which he described Dr. Malik as spokesman of ruling circles in England and United States.

3. The United States representative thereupon spoke firmly. He said that there was clear evidence of interference from U.A.R. (United Arab Republic) in Lebanon creating a grave situation which Council could not ignore. United Nations could not deny Lebanon protection which it had extended to Egypt in 1956. United States was determined to defend independence of Lebanon. The United Kingdom representative followed drawing attention to the evidence which had been produced of U.A.R. interference in the Lebanon and emphasising the disturbing nature of situation in which constitutional opposition was being incited from outside the country to abandon constitutional methods

CONFIDENTIAL

/in favour

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS

To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA

Despatched:

-2-

Received:

6. Ottawa, Canberra, Wellington, Pretoria. Please inform Commonwealth authorities. Four Commonwealth High Commissioners in London have been informed. Salisbury take similar action.

7. Delhi, Karachi, Colombo, Accra, Kuala Lumpur. You have discretion to inform Commonwealth authorities.

SECRETARY OF STATE.

POL.250/1 171

TELEGRAM

From: THE ~~SECRETARY~~ ACTING SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS

To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA

Despatched: 22.45. 11th June, 1958.

Received: 12.00. 12th June, 1958.

TELEGRAM CIRCULAR W. NO. 415. RESTRICTED.

Repeated United Kingdom High Commissioners Delhi, Karachi, Colombo, Accra, Kuala Lumpur.

My immediately preceding telegram.

LEBANON.

Beirut was quieter on night of 10/11th June and army precautions round the Basta (Muslim) quarter are more in evidence.

2. There was a great deal of shooting in Tripoli on 10th June and during following night. This was an effort to break the army cordon round main rebels headquarter of the town. Troops in N. E. Lebanon (some thirty miles from Tripoli) are being withdrawn towards Tripoli and are now holding a covering line twelve miles N.E. of Tripoli. There is believed to be a concentration of some hundreds of rebels some fifteen miles East of Tripoli.

3. Lebanese General Staff Headquarters believe that N. E. Lebanon and North Bekaa will now be comparatively peaceful thanks largely to successful air operations during the past few days. They consider that the next threat will develop from Rashaya (thirty miles due East of Sid). There are also unconfirmed reports that a threat may develop against the Air Force base at Rayak.

4. The Druse rebels in the Chouf area have taken the offensive and are making for the main Beirut-Damascus Road. Reinforcements of Security Forces have been sent to oppose them and the rebels are at present halted some seven miles from the road. There are believed to be several hundred rebels involved.

5. A complete political stalemate continues.

172

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS

To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA

Despatched:

Received:

6. Ottawa, Canberra, Wellington, Pretoria. Please inform Commonwealth authorities. Four Commonwealth High Commissioners in London have been informed. Salisbury take similar action.

7. Delhi, Karachi, Colombo, Accra, Kuala Lumpur. You have discretion to inform Commonwealth authorities.

SECRETARY OF STATE.

POL.250/1 (173)

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS ACTING
To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA

58/5474

13 JUN 1958

Despatched: 22.45. 11th June, 1958.
Received: 12.00. 12th June, 1958.

TELEGRAM CIRCULAR W. NO. 415. RESTRICTED.

Repeated United Kingdom High Commissioners Delhi, Karachi, Colombo, Accra, Kuala Lumpur.

My immediately preceding telegram.

LEBANON.

Beirut was quieter on night of 10/11th June and army precautions round the Basta (Muslim) quarter are more in evidence.

2. There was a great deal of shooting in Tripoli on 10th June and during following night. This was an effort to break the army cordon round main rebels headquarter of the town. Troops in N. E. Lebanon (some thirty miles from Tripoli) are being withdrawn towards Tripoli and are now holding a covering line twelve miles N.E. of Tripoli. There is believed to be a concentration of some hundreds of rebels some fifteen miles East of Tripoli.

3. Lebanese General Staff Headquarters believe that N. E. Lebanon and North Bekaa will now be comparatively peaceful thanks largely to successful air operations during the past few days. They consider that the next threat will develop from Rashaya (thirty miles due East of Sid). There are also unconfirmed reports that a threat may develop against the Air Force base at Rayak.

4. The Druse rebels in the Chouf area have taken the offensive and are making for the main Beirut-Damascus Road. Reinforcements of Security Forces have been sent to oppose them and the rebels are at present halted some seven miles from the road. There are believed to be several hundred rebels involved.

5. A complete political stalemate continues.

/6.

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM. CONFIDENTIAL

174

I.9830/1/2

3. Kakitsubo told me that the Soviet had informed the Japanese delegation that their attitude towards the resolution would depend on what the U.A.R. wanted. Late last night Chiping Kiang (China) told me the President had heard through Hammarksjoeld that the Soviet would veto if the vote were taken last night but their position might be different the following morning after consulting Moscow. This led Tsiang to propose from the Chair at 12.30 a.m. that the Council adjourn until this morning. Although Jamali said he saw no reason why the Council should not continue to sit until 5 a.m. if necessary, Lodge remained silent and the President's proposal for adjournment was adopted without a vote.

4. Jarring told me that as regards the high level component of the observation group, the Secretary-General had in mind to appoint a Norwegian General, and an Ecuadorian diplomat and an Indian diplomat. For the latter Hammarskjoeld had in mind Dayal, former permanent representative here and High Commissioner Designate to Pakistan. About ten military officers would be provided.

5. It was heartening to see the Security Council take a prompt decision following a debate in which very strong support was given to the present Government of Lebanon, and the United States delegation was delighted with the result, just how effective the Council's action will be in saving Lebanon, however, is open to doubt. An observation group can no doubt check the movement of heavy arms and any large body of troops or volunteers into the country for the use of the insurgents, and thereby redress the balance in favour of the Government, which can obtain more foreign equipment. But it cannot control many other forms of subversive intervention or the propaganda attacks. As Abdoh (Iran) remarked privately, if, following the appointment of this observer group, the present Lebanese Government is overthrown and a pro-Nasser regime established (which Abdoh considers highly probable) the presence of the observation group may make it difficult to claim that the political change has been brought about by foreign intervention. Whether such an assessment underlies the U.A.R. and Soviet acquiescence in the adoption of the resolution is a matter for speculation. Probably another factor was the possibility that a Soviet veto would have been followed by an emergency session of the General Assembly under the Uniting For Peace procedure. To Dixon, and indeed many delegates, this seemed the logical next step in the event of a veto.

MIN. & DEPT. E.A.
P.M.'s.

14th June, 1958.

CONFIDENTIAL

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM. CONFIDENTIAL

175

MM.MMc

I.9830/1/2

Dated: 11th June 1958 1950

Rec'd: 13th June 1958 1732

(Transmitted via leased channel.)

FROM:

Australian Mission to the United Nations,
N E W Y O R K.

58/5474

1 8 JUN 1958

NY.421. CONFIDENTIAL.

Repeated Washington for information, London Savingram 62, Ottawa Savingram 53.

From Walker.

Lebanon.

The handling of the Lebanese question in the Security Council has been marked by some hesitation on tactics and uncertainty as to the best course to follow. As you will have noted from reports from this and other centres, the United States and United Kingdom assessment of the gravity of the situation seems to have fluctuated and the Lebanese have been by no means clear as to what they wished the Security Council to do, Malik's attitude has been somewhat contradictory since on the one hand he wanted a full debate and said he would be grateful for any concrete action that the Security Council could take, and on the other hand he endeavoured in the early stages to maintain the conviction that all Arab countries were brothers and good friends.

2. There were rumours on Tuesday morning that the Japanese were considering a resolution to provide for a mission of enquiry but they told me they decided to hold off until hearing statements of various members of the Council. They were somewhat upset when the Swedish representative, without consulting them, announced that he had in mind to introduce the resolution that was subsequently adopted. I have been unable to ascertain whether Jarring's draft resolution did in fact originate within the Swedish delegation but I was informed that he first showed it to the United States in draft about midday on Tuesday and the United States devoted much effort to "polishing it". The United States then became intent upon pressing the matter to a vote (Malik having suggested that the Council should remain in continuous session until it reached a decision). Jarring, who told me in the afternoon that he was finding himself rather more deeply involved than he had originally hoped to be, expressed the view privately that it would be unreasonable to take a vote the same day and that a delay might permit the Soviet Delegation to receive instructions not to veto the resolution. Dixon was also of the opinion that a delay of one day would be tactically desirable to avoid giving the Soviet a pretext for a veto. He put this view to the Americans but they were opposed to any delay on the grounds that the situation in Lebanon was deteriorating rapidly.

CONFIDENTIAL

176

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

3. I.9837

MIN. & DEPT. E.A.
P.M'S

14th June, 1958

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

nationality and sovereignty of the country and a violation of the charter. In Lebanon as in every democratic country there was an opposition but the difference between the ordinary activities of that opposition and the present armed revolt could only be explained by support from abroad. The French Government ahd just received alarming reports from Beirut confirming belief that the Security Council had a duty to take urgent measure to avoid greater deterioration of the situation.

4. Lodge said the clear conclusion wasthat there had been outside interference in Lebanon's internal affairs. Current reports just reaching him from Beirut showed that situation was increasingly critical and that infiltration from Syria was growing. Just as United States had supported steps to maintain territorial integrity of Egypt in 1956 so it would now do the same for Lebanon. Hoped Council would help bring about an end to U.A.R. Interference.

5. Dixon considered that Malik had fully made out and substantiated his contention of U.A.R. interference. Condemned U.A.R. press and radio propaganda. Loutfi had not denied these propaganda activities but had disclaimed supply of arms or trained organisers. In view of the evidence to the contrary Dixon could not accept this assertion. Documented account presented by Lebanon left no doubt that there was continuing interference by the U.A.R. in the internal affairs of Lebanon and he expressed hope that the Council would adopt Swedish resolution as expeditiously as possible. Attacked Sobolev for his support of U.A.R. On proposal of President (China) Council adjourned at 12.30 a.m. on 11th June and resumed at 11 a.m.

6. On resumption Japan Colombia Panama Canada and China in brief statements supported Swedish draft resolution. Loutfi said Swedish draft in no way prejudged issue, unlike statements of United Kingdom and United States representatives. Dismissed Jamali's speech as insults and lies. After short interventions in reply by Iraq and U.S.S.R., Malik wound up debate. His theme was that the very existence of a democratic free independent state was at stake and Lebanon's case was test for United Nations and West.

7. Draft Resolution was then put to the vote and adopted 10-0-1 (U.S.S.R.). In explanation of the vote Sobolev said that as neither party had objected to resolution Soviet had abstained. Secretary-General stated that in accordance with terms of resolution he proposed to take action on two levels-

(a) An observation group of high level individuals whom he would seek from all parts of the world and who could not be assembled immediately, and

(b) a 'servicing group' of military officers from U.N.T.S.O. which he said, in view of preparatory arrangements he had made with Von Horn, could be in Lebanon within 24 hours.

Council adjourned.

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

58/5474

I.9837

Sent: 11th June, 1958
1805
Rec'd: 13th June, 1958
2100

TWWP/BD

Transmitted via leased channel

FROM:

Australian Mission to the United Nations,
NEW YORK.

NY414. UNCLASSIFIED

Security Council Lebanon.

Our 411.

Sobolev opposed the Swedish Resolution. Disturbances in Lebanon represented the organised struggle of the people for their constitutional rights. The threat of foreign intervention came not from arabs but from the West, particularly the United States and the United Kingdom whose forces have been moved towards the borders of Lebanon. The Lebanese Government having met with serious domestic crises with which they were unable to deal turned to the Security Council to give international flavour to what was purely domestic affair.

2. Iraq (Jamali), supporting the Swedish draft, made dramatic attack on the U.A.R. "Nasserism" was interfering in Lebanon and other Arab countries including Iraq have had a taste of it. Nasser was applying subversion methods of international communism in Arab countries by

(a) Arousing and exploiting public dissatisfaction.

(b) Undermining authority of the state by creating chaos.

(c) Providing men and arms for revolution.

He attacked particularly U.A.R. propaganda from Cairo radio and press which used the same language and cliches as radio Moscow. Egyptian military attaches in Arab capitals distributed arms, money, to promote hooliganism and foment internal political trouble. Defending Lebanon's action in bringing the question simultaneously to the Council and the Arab League he said that had Lebanon not come to the Security Council the Arab League might have never met. The Arab League "is more or less" one department of the Egyptian Foreign Office. He also replied to Sobolev in outspoken terms.

3. France (Vaucelles) said that to endeavour to question the legitimacy of a government invested with national representation was to attempt to undermine the

.../nationality

179

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

CONFIDENTIAL

I.9801

Sent: 12th June, 1958
2158
Rec'd: 13th June, 1958
1030

ABK/BD

FROM:

Australian High Commission,
LONDON.

58/5474
17 JUN 1958
P.M.'S. DEPARTMENT SECRET REGISTRY

1608. CONFIDENTIAL. PRIORITY.

Repeated New York 57 from External.

Lebanon.

Although "Times" and "Manchester Guardian" carry somewhat Alarmist Reports of Security situation in Lebanon Foreign Office. Advise that they have as yet had no information from Beirut to confirm reports of serious deterioration in situation. They have some reservations as to whether press reports might not be correct.

2. They also have some doubts whether United Nations observers would in fact be able to prevent arms going into Lebanon but think it possible that their presence might have some calming effect on international strife.

3. Commonwealth Relations Office telegram W.415 gives latest position as known to Foreign Office.

MIN. & DEPT. E.A.
MIN. & DEPT. DEFENCE
P.M'S.

13th June, 1958

CONFIDENTIAL

SECRET

POL.250/1.

"S"

180

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS

To: THE ACTING HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA

Despatched: 20.36. 12th June, 1958.

Received: 10.45. 13th June, 1958.

ROUTINE.

TELEGRAM CIRCULAR W NUMBER 417. SECRET.

Repeated United Kingdom High Commissioners Delhi, Karachi, Colombo, Accra, Kuala Lumpur.

My telegram circular W No.415.

LEBANON.

As indicated in my telegram under reference there has recently been some increase in rebel activity in Lebanon. Latest rebel movements have however so far done little to change position which remains one of stalemate with neither side making any appreciable advance.

2. As result of Security Council adoption of Swedish resolution on 11th June immediate steps are being taken to arrange for despatch of observation group to Lebanese borders. It is hoped that presence of group will have steadying psychological effect. If the United Arab Republic (U.A.R.) are seeking an opportunity to disengage it may enable them to do so without losing face. On the other hand if it is Nasser's intention to keep up pressure it seems unlikely that the observers will be able to do much to prevent infiltration and arms running.

3. On balance we think decision to send observers is a useful development. But it would be a mistake to expect too much of it.

4. Ottawa, Canberra, Wellington, Pretoria and Salisbury. Please inform Commonwealth authorities. Five Commonwealth High Commissioners in London have been informed.

5. (Delhi, Karachi, Colombo, Accra, Kuala Lumpur). You have discretion to inform Commonwealth authorities.

SECRETARY OF STATE.

SECRET

SECRET

POL.250/1.

'S' 181

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS
To: THE ACTING HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA

Despatched: 20.36. 12th June, 1958.
Received: 10.45. 13th June, 1958.

ROUTINE.

TELEGRAM CIRCULAR W NUMBER 417. SECRET.

Repeated United Kingdom High Commissioners Delhi, Karachi, Colombo, Accra, Kuala Lumpur.

My telegram circular W No.415.

LEBANON.

As indicated in my telegram under reference there has recently been some increase in rebel activity in Lebanon. Latest rebel movements have however so far done little to change position which remains one of stalemate with neither side making any appreciable advance.

2. As result of Security Council adoption of Swedish resolution on 11th June immediate steps are being taken to arrange for despatch of observation group to Lebanese borders. It is hoped that presence of group will have steadying psychological effect. If the United Arab Republic (U.A.R.) are seeking an opportunity to disengage it may enable them to do so without losing face. On the other hand if it is Nasser's intention to keep up pressure it seems unlikely that the observers will be able to do much to prevent infiltration and arms running.

3. On balance we think decision to send observers is a useful development. But it would be a mistake to expect too much of it.

4. Ottawa, Canberra, Wellington, Pretoria and Salisbury. Please inform Commonwealth authorities. Five Commonwealth High Commissioners in London have been informed.

5. (Delhi, Karachi, Colombo, Accra, Kuala Lumpur). You have discretion to inform Commonwealth authorities.

SECRETARY OF STATE.

SECRET

SECRET POL. 250/1

182

G. Unkles, Esq.,
Prime Minister's Department,
CANBERRA. A. C. T.

58/5474
17 JUN 1958
P.M.'s DEPARTMENT
SECRET REGISTRY

With the Compliments

of the

Official Secretary

Enclo: 2 copies of telegram
circular W. No. 417
Lebanon.

Office of the High Commissioner
for the United Kingdom,
Canberra, A.C.T.

SECRET 13th June, 1958

183

RESTRICTED

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

I.9820/1

MIN. & DEPT. E.A.
MIN. & DEPT. DEFENCE
P.M'S

13th June, 1958.

RESTRICTED

184

RESTRICTED

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

MBP:CM

I.9820/1 58/5474

Dated: 12th June, 1958.
2115
Rec'd: 13th June, 1958.
1246
(Transmitted via leased channel)

FROM:

Australian Mission to United Nations,
NEW YORK.

NY425. RESTRICTED. PRIORITY.

Repeated Washington for information.

Lebanon.

At his press conference today the Secretary General made the following points in reply to correspondents' questions.-

1. Five U.N.T.S.O. Officers have arrived in Beirut, five more are expected on Saturday.

2. As regards the main observer group one has accepted the invitation, the other two replies expected today. One will be in Lebanon early next week and the other two as soon as possible thereafter.

3. The Secretary General selected advance party of officers from U.N.T.S.O. rather than from U.N.E.F. because their officers are trained in specific observer work and because U.N.E.F. is stationed on U.A.R. territory and there are objections to mixing "U.N.E.F. operation and this one".

4. Observers will work exclusively in Lebanese territory.

5. Observers are not a police force in U.N.E.F. sense, they are observer team, the presence of which essential as "contribution to preventing possible illegal traffic".

6. He would delay decisions on numbers of observers required until he knew how operation should be organized. Their length of duty would depend on developments in the area. The United States Delegation told us that Cordier has left for Israel to discuss Mount Scopus situation and will first call at Beirut to discuss arrangements for work of both observer teams.

Malania (Secretary General's Office) told us that no Australian observers have so far been selected to go to Lebanon. The group is led by Colonel Brown (New Zealand observer) and they are all officers whose terms of duty are nearing expiry and who have had many years of experience in the area. He said the Secretariat was, as indicated by the Secretary - General in press conference, playing the situation by ear and relying on the advice of von Horn and Cordier.

RESTRICTED

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

I.9888/89/914

Group itself would consist of mixed political and military representatives chosen as individuals but with due regard to country. Group would have its headquarters in Beirut. Inspection officers would cover main roads into Lebanon. The latter could not be expected to cover the whole frontier but it would be up to the Lebanese authorities to draw attention to movements of arms across frontier. Hammarskjoeld said that he had told Loufti that group would operate in Lebanon only.

6. So far as personnel of group was concerned, five U.N.T.S.O. officers were going to Lebanon immediately. (Bergus said they had already arrived.) Five additional U.N.T.S.O. officers would arrive in Lebanon before next week. Officers seconded from U.N.T.S.O. would provide in initial stage nuclear of field inspection officers.

7. Hammarskjoeld had asked a Norwegian General to be Chairman of group. He expected him to be in Lebanon by Friday week. He had asked former President of Ecuador and Ray Dayal (former Indian representative at United Nations) to be other members of group. He expected him to be in Lebanon by Tuesday. He had not yet received reply from latter. Malik had authorised Azkoul to draw up headquarters agreement with United Nations secretariat to provide necessary immunities, etc. Hammarskjoeld expected Lebanese Government to provide jeeps and other equipment and to meet substantial proportion of costs. Hammarskjoeld had asked United States to provide two helicopters from its european stocks and Bergus said this request would be met.

Situation in Lebanon.

8. Bergus said Druse Leader (Jumblat) had broken truce and cut into Beirut-Damascus highway but had since been driven back after air attack. New truce had been negotiated with Humblat. Lebanese Government, mainly through use of its small air force, was able to check any major initiative by dissidents but was unable to exercise much initiative itself.

9. Army was now clearly following policy of avoiding casualties, and relations between President Chamoun and General Chahab (Army Chief of Staff) fluctuated from day to day. One of the risks of United Nations observation operation was that Army would now sit back and expect United Nations to do all its work. Another risk was that Chamoun would become even more intransigeant. Bergus commented that Lebanese were not martial race and that even dissidents were doing most of their firing into air.

MIN. & DEPT. E.A.
MIN. & DEPT. DEFENCE.
P.M.'s.

15th June, 1958.

186

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM. CONFIDENTIAL

MMc

I.9888/89/14

Dated: 12th June 1958
1943
Rec'd: 13th June 1958
2244
(Transmitted via leased channel.)

FROM:

Australian Embassy,
WASHINGTON.

962. CONFIDENTIAL.

Repeated New York (information copies to London and Ottawa).

Lebanon.

Following from Bergus (Israel-Lebanon Affairs) on 12th June.

Security Council Resolution.

2. State Department was pleased with Security Council Resolution for reasons

(a) point had been established that Lebanon situation was international issue and not merely domestic problem as Soviet Union and U.A.R. had sought to argue;

(b) with this resolution on books it opened way for Security Council to discuss further action should this become necessary;

(c) presence of United Nations observers might have inhibiting effect on flow of weapons and munitions across U.A.R. border into Lebanon.

3. Bergus thought U.S.S.R. had not vetoed the resolution because it knew that United States and other members of Council would carry Swedish resolution to Assembly where it was likely to receive support of substantial majority. Also, Hammarskjoeld had said that he had authority to establish observation mission himself and that he would use this authority if Swedish resolution was vetoed. (Bergus asked us to safeguard this information.)

4. Bergus commented that Swedes had been very helpful but that United States had not found it easy to persuade Malik to accept Swedish resolution. Swedes had said that they would not take any initiative if there was going to be protracted East-West fight in Security Council. The latter was what Malik had wanted.

Implementation of Resolution.

5. Hammarskjoeld was moving quickly to get observation mission established. He expressed to United States mission to United Nations today satisfaction with wide powers the resolution gave him. He intended to establish observation group at two levels.

CONFIDENTIAL

187

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

CONFIDENTIAL

I. 9852.

:MP

Dated: 13th June, 1958. 1345.
Rec'd: 14th June, 1958. 0900.

58/5474

FROM:

Australian Legation,
TEL AVIV.

42. CONFIDENTIAL

I discussed Lebanon briefly yesterday with the Director General of Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Ministry still feels there is no additional short term danger to Israel. Apprehension of last weekend Lebanese rebel sympathisers crossing Ø(my despatch 303) has had no repercussions leading to involvment of Israel in the present happenings.

Any definite deterioration of the position of the Government of Lebanon in favour of United Arab Republic would of course give concern to Israel but in this respect they can only await developments.

.........Ballard.

Ø corrupt group.

MIN.&DEPT. E.A.
MIN.&DEPT. DEFENCE
P.M's

14th June, 1958.

CONFIDENTIAL

188

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM. CONFIDENTIAL

I.9937

Sent: 14th June, 1958
1740
Rec'd: 15th June, 1958
0830

MP/BD

FROM:

Australian High Commission,
LONDON.

58/5474
18 JUN 1958
P.M.'S. DEPARTMENT
SECRET REGISTRY

1628. CONFIDENTIAL.

Addressed Canberra, 1628, repeated New York
58.

From External.

Lebanon.

Rose, Foreign Office, advises that alarmist press reports are still unverified by the United Kingdom Embassy. The Security situation does not appear to have improved nor to have deteriorated significantly. No change in political situation is reported. He thought the U.A.R. had probably persuaded the Soviet not to veto Security Council Resolution.

MIN. & DEPT. E.A.
MIN. & DEPT. DEFENCE
P.M'S.

15th June, 1958

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS
To: THE ACTING HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA

Despatched: 19.10. 14th June, 1958.
Received: 10.30. 16th June, 1958.

PRESSE.

TELEGRAM CIRCULAR W NUMBER 423.

Addressed United Kingdom High Commissioners Ottawa, Canberra, Wellington, Pretoria, Salisbury W No.423 repeated other posts.

My telegram circular W No.417.

LEBANON.

There were five explosions in Beirut on night of 11/12 June but the city was otherwise quiet. More shops and businesses are opening up again. There was considerable shooting in Tripoli Town during same night and a few shots at Sidon.

2. All is quiet in North Lebanon and in North Bekaa. There was some local skirmishing south of Rayak including an unsuccessful attack with energa grenades on an armoured car troop in camp. The reported threat against South Lebanon (my telegram circular W No.415) has not developed. The Druses in the Chouf area have withdrawn.

3. The past five weeks have had remarkably little immediate effect on the Lebanese economy: the Lebanese pound has hardly been affected. The port is congested but ships continue to discharge and the authorities are allowing goods to be cleared without payment of Customs Duty on production of a certificate guaranteed by a Bank. Prices of some common foodstuffs have risen in Beirut but no shortages have developed.

4. Ottawa, Canberra, Wellington, Pretoria. Please inform Commonwealth Authorities. Four High Commissioners in London have been informed. ~~Pretoria~~ Salisbury take similar action.

5. To Delhi, Karachi, Colombo, Accra, Kuala Lumpur. You have discretion to inform Commonwealth authorities.

Mr Unkles

POL.250/1.

190

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS

To: THE ACTING HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA

58/5474

Despatched: 19.10. 14th June, 1958.

Received: 10.30. 16th June, 1958.

PRESSE.

TELEGRAM CIRCULAR W NUMBER 423.

Addressed United Kingdom High Commissioners Ottawa, Canberra, Wellington, Pretoria, Salisbury W No.423 repeated other posts.

My telegram circular W No.417.

LEBANON.

There were five explosions in Beirut on night of 11/12 June but the city was otherwise quiet. More shops and businesses are opening up again. There was considerable shooting in Tripoli Town during same night and a few shots at Sidon.

2. All is quiet in North Lebanon and in North Bekaa. There was some local skirmishing south of Rayak including an unsuccessful attack with energa grenades on an armoured car troop in camp. The reported threat against South Lebanon (my telegram circular W No.415) has not developed. The Druses in the Chouf area have withdrawn.

3. The past five weeks have had remarkably little immediate effect on the Lebanese economy: the Lebanese pound has hardly been affected. The port is congested but ships continue to discharge and the authorities are allowing goods to be cleared without payment of Customs Duty on production of a certificate guaranteed by a Bank. Prices of some common foodstuffs have risen in Beirut but no shortages have developed.

4. Ottawa, Canberra, Wellington, Pretoria. Please inform Commonwealth Authorities. Four High Commissioners in London have been informed. ~~Pretoria~~ Salisbury take similar action.

5. To Delhi, Karachi, Colombo, Accra, Kuala Lumpur. You have discretion to inform Commonwealth authorities.

SECRETARY OF STATE.

5. No further approach has yet been made by President Chamoun. According to our latest reports, General Chehab has spoken in gloomy terms about the situation, saying that the security forces were on the defensive and that the initiative had passed to the Rebels. He saw no prospect of the present disturbances being ended quickly by his own men, although they were willing to fight on. President Chamoun has said that he knew the security forces could re-establish order but they could not do so under General Chehab.

C
O
P
Y.

TOP SECRET

192

TEXT OF MESSAGE.

On the 15th June Dr Malik, on instructions from President Chamoun, asked whether Americans and ourselves would intervene militarily in Lebanon at once if the Government of the Lebanon so asked.

2. We have already had under consideration the effect on our position of the Security Council decision to post United Nations observers on the Lebanese border. We do not think that the Security Council action justifies any relaxation in the present state of readiness of Anglo-United States forces. Indeed, we think we should maintain a state of preparedness in case the situation should deteriorate and the Security Council require outside help. Further, to stand down our forces would be likely to encourage the United Arab Republic to step up its activities.

3. But in view of the steps which have already been taken by the Security Council, it would be extremely difficult for the Americans and ourselves to meet a request for assistance from the Lebanese Government unless the matter had again been raised in the Council.

4. In the light of these considerations, a reply has been sent to President Chamoun's message to the effect that, while the position regarding military assistance remains unchanged, in view of the United Nations efforts we would think a further reference to the Security Council necessary before any request for assistance was made. President Chamoun was also reminded that the primary purpose of assistance would be to protect British and American life and property and that it would be necessary to be able to count upon the Lebanese security forces themselves exerting the maximum effort to defend the independence of the Lebanon.

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

C
O
P
Y

193

17th June, 1958.

I have been asked to pass to you for your own personal information, the enclosed message about the situation in the Lebanon. I have also been asked to emphasize the need for the greatest secrecy in this matter.

(sgd) N. PRITCHARD.

The Rt. Hon^{ble} R. G. Menzies, C.H., Q.C.
Parliament House,
Canberra, A.C.T.

TOP SECRET

194

forces were on the defensive and that the initiative had passed to the Rebels. He saw no prospect of the present disturbances being ended quickly by his own men, although they were willing to fight on. President Chamoun has said that he knew the security forces could re-establish order but they could not do so under General Chehab.

TOP SECRET

195

TEXT OF MESSAGE

On the 15th June Dr. Malik, on instructions from President Chamoun, asked whether Americans and ourselves would intervene militarily in Lebanon at once if the Government of the Lebanon so asked.

2. We have already had under consideration the effect on our position of the Security Council decision to post United Nations observers on the Lebanese border. We do not think that the Security Council action justifies any relaxation in the present state of readiness of Anglo-United States forces. Indeed, we think we should maintain a state of preparedness in case the situation should deteriorate and the Security Council require outside help. Further, to stand down our forces would be likely to encourage the United Arab Republic to step up its activities.

3. But in view of the steps which have already been taken by the Security Council, it would be extremely difficult for the Americans and ourselves to meet a request for assistance from the Lebanese Government unless the matter had again been raised in the Council.

4. In the light of these considerations, a reply has been sent to President Chamoun's message to the effect that, while the position regarding military assistance remains unchanged, in view of the United Nations efforts we would think a further reference to the Security Council necessary before any request for assistance was made. President Chamoun was also reminded that the primary purpose of assistance would be to protect British and American life and property and that it would be necessary to be able to count upon the Lebanese security forces themselves exerting the maximum effort to defend the independence of the Lebanon.

5. No further approach has yet been made by President Chamoun. According to our latest reports, General Chehab has spoken in gloomy terms about the situation, saying that the security

/forces

Copy: E.A. (Mr Tange) under Sec's comp. slip 19/6/58

TOP SECRET

196

17th June, 1958.

I have been asked to pass to you for your own personal information, the enclosed message about the situation in the Lebanon. I have also been asked to emphasize the need for the greatest secrecy in this matter.

N. PRITCHARD

The Rt. Hon[ble] R. G. Menzies, C.H., Q.C.
Parliament House,
Canberra, A.C.T.

Copy: E.A. (Mr Tange) under Sec's comp. slip 19/6/58

20 JUN 1958

TOP SECRET

197

58/5474

17th June, 1958.

Sir Allen Brown,
Prime Minister's Department,
Canberra.

With the compliments of the
Acting
High Commissioner
for the
United Kingdom

Letter enclosing text of message to Mr. Menzies: Lebanon.

Office of the High Commissioner
for the United Kingdom.
Canberra. A.C.T.

58/5474
17 JUN 1958
SECRETARY'S OFFICE
P.M'S. DEPARTMENT

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

CONFIDENTIAL

I. 10076

2.

MIN. & DEPT. E.A.
MIN. & DEPT. DEFENCE
P.M.'s

18th June, 1958.

CONFIDENTIAL

199

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM. CONFIDENTIAL

58/5474

FPG:SS

I. 10076

Dated: 17th June, 1958 2020

FROM:

Rec'd: 18th June, 1958 1005

Australian High Commission,
L O N D O N.

1657. CONFIDENTIAL.

Repeated Saving Washington, New York.

From External.

Lebanon.

1. The Foreign Office advise that increased fighting in Beirut over the weekend (in which the Prime Minister's house was destroyed) seems to have died down. Threat of panic is subsiding and confidence slowly returning.

2. The United Kingdom Ambassador Beirut reports that the first reaction there to the Security Council Resolution was that the Government had won a definite victory and the Opposition suffered psychological defeat. The latter however issued a strongly worded statement, 12th June, that the Resolution had no effect on the crisis, which was internal and in which Western intervention was a main factor.

3. According to United Kingdom reports there is confusion as to the function of observers. The Lebonese Foreign Ministry have stated observers will "guarantee" Lebanon against foreign interference. Hammarskjoeld and Bunche initially favoured role for observers confined to passive observation of current infiltration or illegal supply of arms. In response to United Kingdom and United States prompting they now seem to take a less restrictive view of observers' role and to agree that observers should take account for instance of U.A.R. radio propaganda. They maintain the view however that observers must be careful not to take obvious sides in internal politics.

4. The Foreign Office have been working to ensure that the scope and nature of observers' reports effectively rebute U.A.R. denial of interference. To this end they are urging the Lebonese to co-operate with observers by e.g. providing dossiers of past infiltration and examples of intercepted U.A.R. equipment. Difficulty is, according to United Kingdom Ambassador Beirut, that large numbers of observers will be required for effective watch of the frontier area, four fifths of which is out of the Government's control. Chehab is sceptical about the value of observers. General Burns has suggested as many as 5,000 may be needed for effective control. Hammarskjoeld appears to be thinking of a total of 300 to 400 but only if the need is shown by reports from the observer group.

CONFIDENTIAL

200

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

CONFIDENTIAL

MM:ABK. I.10086.

58/5474

Dated: 17th June, 1958.
1925.

FROM:

Rec'd: 18th June, 1958.
1153.

Australian Mission to the United Nations,
NEW YORK.

(Transmitted via leased channel)

NY445. CONFIDENTIAL.

Our 444. Lebanon Military Observers.

Malania (Secretary-General's Office) told us today that an urgent appeal has been made to the following Governments to provide Military Observers to serve in Lebanon.

Denmark, Finland, India, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Brazil, Burma, Ceylon, Canada, Chile, Nepal and Peru. He said the names of these countries are not being released and asked us to treat this information as confidential. He said that these countries had been approached because either they do not contribute any Military Observers to U.N.T.S.O. or U.N.M.O.G.I.P. or because they have relatively few officers serving with these two groups. He said Australia had not been asked to supply observers for Lebanon because of the numbers we do already supply for service in Palestine and Kashmir.

2. It seems to me that it would be desirable on General Political grounds for Australia to provide Military Observers for service in Lebanon if requested. If Australia would be in a position to supply some officers on request, I think it would be useful if I could be authorised to convey privately and confidentially to the Secretary-General our readiness to assist in this way.

Walker.

MIN. & DEPT. E.A.
MIN. & DEPT. DEFENCE.
P.M.'S.

18th June, 1958.

CONFIDENTIAL

201

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

I.10089

the reconnaissance type together with helicopters. "Steps have been taken to meet this need".

MIN. & DEPT. E.A.
MIN. & DEPT DEFENCE
P.M'S

18th June, 1958.

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

CM I.10089

Dated: 17th June, 1958.
2000
Rec'd: 18th June, 1958.
1529
(Transmitted via leased channel)

FROM:

Australian Mission to United Nations,
NEW YORK.

NY.444. UNCLASSIFIED.

Repeated Washington for information.

Lebanon.

The Secretary General announced today he would leave New York for Beirut tonight to attend the first meeting of the Observation Group. He said he expected to be away about a week.

2. The Secretary General today circulated the Report (S/4029) on "implementation to date of the resolution of the Security Council on 11th June on the complaint by Lebanon". The report states that the Observation Group (Plaza, Dayal and Bull) will hold its first meeting this week probably on 19th June. The group will constitute itself and determine its own procedures. Bull arrived in Beirut on 15th, the other two expected on 17th June. Ten U.N.T.S.O. Observers have arrived and Von Horn has agreed to provide another five. The observers began active reconnaissance on the morning of 13th June in Beirut and its environs. Teams now working according to a schedule and the plan being followed is to have them probe further each day in the direction of the frontier.

3. The report states that observation task in connection with "illegal infiltration ... across Lebanese borders" is greatly complicated because only a small part of the total frontier appears to be controlled by Government forces. Immediate aim is to establish field stations, one at Tripoli on the northern border area, one in Baalbec area and one at Marjoun.

4. On the basis of assessment by members of the operation now in Beirut and in view of the planned method of operation of observers, the number of military observers is being increased to 100 and an urgent appeal has been made to the fourteen Goverhments to provide officers for this purpose.

5. The Lebanese Government has designated a Minister to be in charge of relations between the Government and the Observation Group and Lebanon set up a five-man commission to assist this purpose. The Secretary General has been advised of the need for a small number of light aircraft of

TOP SECRET

203

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS.

To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA.

Despatched:

Received:

But in view of Secretary General actual reinforcements cannot go beyond two to three hundred men without new and separate resolution of Security Council since group was envisaged as an observer group and not a police force. Body of this size clearly cannot prevent interference by United Arab Republic still less put an end to fighting.

4. Please inform Commonwealth authorities at suitably high level stressing secrecy of information. Information in my telegram under reference may also now be made available to similar limited circle.

SECRETARY OF STATE.

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

204

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS.

To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA.

Despatched: 10.47 hours 18.6.58.

Received: 08.00 hours 19.6.58.

TELEGRAM NO. 890 TOP SECRET PRIORITY

Addressed: Ottawa 978, Canberra 890, Wellington 622.

Repeated: U.K.Del. New York.

My telegram 969. to Ottawa.

LEBANON

Americans and ourselves are considering how matter might best be handled if Lebanese situation again comes before Security Council.

2. As question is still on agenda, Lebanese could raise matter by summoning emergency meeting of Council, It would be extremely helpful if at same time report from United Nations observers could be placed before Council which would, as a minimum, show that there was a state of chaos in Lebanon and might at best say that deliberate steps were being taken by Lebanese opposition and/or United Arab Republic element s to thwart observers. Lebanese Government might then ask either for despatch of United Nations force or that certain countries should assume certain responsibilities in Lebanon. Problem of Russian veto might be overcome by avoiding resolution by use of consensus procedure. In event of veto question would arise of Americans and ourselves responding directly to Lebanese request for assistance. In absence of "armed attack" it would not be possible to rely directly on article 51 of Charter for this but since article 51 allows for collective self-defence a fortiori it would seem to allow collective preparation to meet a threat to independence of sovereign state. It would be open to us at same time to go to Assembly under Uniting for Peace procedure.

3. In meanwhile we consider it important that the most should be made of action already sanctioned by Security Council, As reported in my telegram W.430 XXXXXXXX Secretary General is taking steps to raise force of armed men to assist observers on Lebanese border.

/But

19th June, 1958. 205

58/5474

1 9 JUN 1958

G. Unkles, Esq.
Prime Minister's Department,
Canberra.

With the Compliments

of the

Official Secretary

Copy of telegram No. 890: Lebanon.

Office of the High Commissioner
for the United Kingdom,
Canberra, A.C.T.

POL.250/1.

SECRET

206

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS

To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA

Despatched:

Received:

whether he has the qualities necessary to fill the position even if he were willing to accept it which is doubtful.

3. Please inform Commonwealth authorities at a suitably high level stressing secrecy of this information.

SECRETARY OF STATE.

SECRET

Hr Unkles 207

SECRET

'S'

POL.250/1.

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS

To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA

Despatched: 17.55. 19th June, 1958.

Received: 08.30. 20th June, 1958. 58/5474

PRIORITY.

TELEGRAM NUMBER 900. SECRET.

Addressed United Kingdom High Commissioners Ottawa No.1000, Canberra No.900, Wellington No.632.

My telegram No.978 to Ottawa.

LEBANON.

In light of General Chehab's continued indecision and unwillingness to take vigorous action against dissidents President Chamoun would seem to be making up his mind to take risk to morale of Army which General's replacement would mean. American and United Kingdom Ambassadors at Beirut have suggested to President Chamoun that he might make public statement appealing to opposition to lay down their arms with promise of amnesty on all those not actually convicted of crimes. President it has been suggested might then ask General Chehab to take most energetic measures to restore law and order. If General refused to co-operate circumstances would then be favourable for President to accept his resignation. President Chamoun agreed to discuss possibility of making a public appeal with Lebanese Government.

2. With regard to President Chamoun's own position in view of Prime Minister's pledge not to seek to amend the constitution to permit President to serve a second term it would be necessary for President to find a new Prime Minister if he wished to take this step. It is virtually certain that he would be unable to find a Moslem willing or able to form a cabinet for this declared purpose. President would appear himself to have weighed these factors and to have abandoned any idea of re-election. His present term expires at latest in September. At the present time there is no obvious candidate to succeed him. The vacillation and lack of determination shown by General Chehab who in past has appeared most hopeful alternative would now seem to make it very doubtful

SECRET

TOP SECRET

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS.
To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA.

Despatched: 23.50 hours 18.6.58.

Received: 12.30 hours 19.6.58.

TELEGRAM NO. 896 TOP SECRET PRIORITY

Addressed Ottawa 994, Canberra 896, Wellington 629

My telegram W.441

LEBANON

Following is further information about situation in Lebanon of more secret nature than that contained in my telegram under reference, which you may pass to Canadian/Australian/ New Zealand authorities on same basis as daily situation reports which have been sent to you in past (see my telegram No. 662 to Ottawa). Begins..

There have been reports that an attack on Government in Beirut was expected to take place on night of 17/18 June. No attack had taken place by morning of 18 June and later reports have suggested that it has been postponed. It appears that intention was that Jumblatt would march on Beirut and at the same time rebels in Basta would attack President's palace. Ends.

SECRETARY OF STATE.

TOP SECRET

19th June, 1958. 209

TOP SECRET

G. Unkles, Esq.
Prime Minister's Department,
Canberra.

58/5474

20 JUN 1958

With the Compliments

of the

Official Secretary

Copy of telegram No. 896: Lebanon.

Office of the High Commissioner
for the United Kingdom,
Canberra, A.C.T.

POL.250/1.

210

CONFIDENTIAL

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

OUTWARD CABLEGRAM.

58/5474
24 JUN 1958
P.M.'S. DEPARTMENT REGISTRY

FPG:ABK. O.7853.

Sent: 19th June, 1958.
1428.
(Transmitted via leased channel)

TO:

Australian Mission to the United Nations,
NEW YORK.

324. CONFIDENTIAL

Your 445. Lebanon Military Observers. We feel that the Secretariat acted with consideration and discretion in not appealing to us to send observers. If they should later make a request we would give it due consideration. Until a request is made, however, we would not wish to pursue the matter in any way.

MIN. & DEPT. E.A.
DEFENCE.
P.M.'S.

20th June, 1958.

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

TOP SECRET

COPY NUMBER 3

I. 10219.

4. James thought the political repercussions would be another matter and no doubt the U.A.R. and Soviet would seek to take full advantage of the situation though United Nations approval, if obtained, should be a substantial counter. This would have to be faced of course as U.A.R. success in Lebanon would undoubtedly be followed by further attempts elsewhere.

5. Latest reports indicated that a request for intervention was slightly less probable. Middleton thought that the crux of the problem was Chamoun's position. He would clearly have to be replaced but the difficulty was to see a suitable successor. Middleton also thought that if intervention were requested it could only be done if Chamoun announced simultaneously his intention of resigning.

MIN. & DEPT. E.A.
P.M's (SIR ALLEN BROWN)

20th June, 1958.

TOP SECRET

212

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

TOP SECRET

COPY NUMBER 3

I. 10219.

:MP

Dated: 19th June, 1958. 1500.
Rec'd: 20th June, 1958. 0830.

A.T.G.

58/5474

25 JUN 1958

FROM:

Australian High Commission,
LONDON.

1691. TOP SECRET PRIORITY

From External.

Tange from Davis.

LEBANON.

James C.R.O. has been keeping me in touch orally with special telegrams on Lebanon sent through the United Kingdom High Commission. However, I have been at some disadvantage in not seeing them but have sought James's assurance from time to time that you were being kept fully informed. It has also been difficult at times to get information from the Foreign Office or C.R.O. because of the existence of these special telegrams.

2. One aspect of the problem, which I have raised with him, is whether the United Kingdom had provided an assessment of possible repercussions of intervention should this in fact be requested and take place. I referred particularly to possible action by U.A.R. and/or the Soviet.

3. James indicated that these points had not been specifically covered in messages to Canberra and he would get the views of the Foreign Office and J.I.C. and advise me further. He stressed that United Kingdom thinking was based on the assumption that United Nations approval in some form would be obtained, if possible before intervention and certainly very soon after, if intervention became an urgent requirement. He did not clearly see yet how United Nations approval was to be obtained. Dixon was thinking in terms of possible concensus resolution in the Security Council or alternatively uniting for peace procedure. This United Nations approval, if obtained, should minimize the risk of wider repercussions or intervention. Also the that it would be the legal Government of Lebanon asking for assistance would make additional assistance to the rebels from U.A.R. or the Soviet difficult to justify. He foresaw further that United States/United Kingdom forces would, if intervention occurred, operate primarily to seal off the frontiers on the assumption that the Lebanese Army could and would then operate effectively to suppress the rebels. In his view the intervention would be a limited operation which would terminate the incident without major risk of spreading into a wider conflict.

TOP SECRET ./.

documented account which we have heard from Dr. Malik can leave no doubt that there has been and is continuing, interference in many forms by the U.A.R. in the internal affairs of the Lebanon.

It is the expectation of my delegation that the Government of the Lebanon will receive support from the overwhelming majority of world opinion for the justice of its complaint and it will, I am sure, be generally agreed that the Government of the Lebanon is entitled to expect from the Council, not only sympathy and support but also assistance and redress.

We heard the Foreign Minister of the Lebanon at the outset of our proceedings this afternoon warn the Security Council that infiltration of men and smuggling of arms into the Lebanon was increasing and that the situation was now becoming very serious. We have heard the representative of United States state that his information from the area confirms the seriousness of the situation. Earlier this evening we heard the representative of Sweden make a practical proposal for immediate action. It is my hope that the Council will adopt this resolution as expeditiously as possible, as an immediate practical measure calculated to stabilise the situation and reduce the threat to peace and security.

COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS OFFICE MEMORANDUM DATED 11TH JUNE, 1958

213

length on this question of the propaganda from the U.A.R. inciting the people of the Lebanon to revolt against their established Government, this is not only because it is internationally wrong that this kind of warfare on the air should be employed but also because it is in such media of public communication that intentions are revealed. There are other acts - gun-running, the infiltration of armed men, attacks on frontier posts - which fill in the details of a picture framed by incitement of the people of the Lebanon to rise against their constituted Government and vilification of the members of that Government. It is disturbing to find the representative of the U.S.S.R. in full and strident support of a doctrine so subversive of everything that the United Nations stands for.

The total picture which emerges so clearly from the statements of the Foreign Minister of the Lebanon, as well as from the broadcasts and Press attacks which are on file for all to read, is a sombre and disturbing picture. It is indeed correctly and soberly described in the terms of the item on our agenda as "a situation the continuance of which is likely to endanger international peace and security". For if the international community once accepts the principle that one country may interfere at will with the internal affairs of another country with the object of overthrowing the constituted government of that country, what security will there be for any government on any continent? It is disturbing again to find the U.S.S.R. in support of these ideas.

There is an aspect of this interference which makes its character all the more disturbing. We have heard the distinguished representative of the U.A.R. imply, if he did not go so far as to say it in precise language, that it is wrong for the Government of the Lebanon to bring their complaint to the international forum of the Security Council. If Mr. Loutfi means that this question ought to have been settled in the League of Arab States, surely the answer is that the Government of the Lebanon made every effort to find a solution at the Arab League, as indeed it was their duty to do in accordance with the Charter provisions which encourage nations in the various regions of the world to settle their differences between themselves? But it is reasonable that the Government of the Lebanon should take no further steps if it has been unable to obtain satisfaction in the regional forum? I hardly think that Dr. Loufti would wish to maintain such an argument. It is true that Mr. Sobolev tried to do so, by the extraordinary assertion that there must not be any interference in the internal affairs of the Lebanon by the Security Council.

What then does the distinguished representative of the U.A.R. really mean when he takes exception to the Government of the Lebanon bringing their complaint to the Security Council? Can it be that he claims the Government of the Lebanon are in the wrong if they are not willing to do what they are told by the U.A.R.? I think that the contrary view will be generally held in this Council - that it is wrong that any country in a given area, however powerful, should assert the right to lay down the law to a smaller country in the area.

The complaint we are considering constitutes a very serious charge for one country to bring against another. There can be no doubt in our minds that this complaint would not have been lightly brought by the Government of the Lebanon to the Security Council. We are all aware of the peaceful and peace-loving nature of the Lebanon, a small and comparatively unarmed country. We all know its close attachment to the bonds of race and tradition which link the Arab world. After hearing the Foreign Minister of the Lebanon can anyone suppose that his Government would have taken the grave step of bringing this issue here had it not been that they considered themselves to be subjected to an intolerable degree of interference from another country in their internal affairs? The

documented/

such as speeches in and out of Parliament, political rallies, manifestos, etc., in favour of violence against the ordinary population and the constituted authorities, carried out with arms provided from abroad. It is profoundly disturbing that the representative of the U.S.S.R. apparently supports this principle and practice.

The distinguished representative of the U.A.R. had denied that any material assistance has been afforded to the subversive elements in the Lebanon and has contended that what is going on there is all their own work.

But he has not denied, and he cannot very well do so because the evidence is there for all to read and hear, that the Press and Radio of the U.A.R. have been inciting the people to revolt against their Government, and have been vilifying the leaders of that Government in most violent terms.

Nor, I note, has he sought to deny, presumably because he judges that it would not be credible, that the Press and Radio of the U.A.R. are effectively under the direction of the Government of the U.A.R.

Instead he has simply advised members of the Council that we ought not to concern ourselves with this aspect of the question, and has argued that since Press and Radio campaigns are not capable of endangering international peace and security that the Council is not competent to consider them.

This is an attitude which members of the Council can hardly be expected to accept. We can surely not expect that the Government of any country should submit passively to a persistent campaign of threats from the Press and Radio of a more powerful neighbour without seeking redress. As the distinguished Foreign Minister of the Lebanon pointed out, the weapon of radio propaganda is especially powerful and dangerous in the conditions in the Middle East. Nor would it be in accord with the past attitude of the United Nations for this Council to ignore this aspect of the situation.

Mr. Lodge has already drawn attention to the essentials of peace resolution No. 290 adopted at the 4th session of the General Assembly on December 1st, 1949, which called on member nations amongst other things,

> "to refrain from any threats, or acts, direct or indirect, aimed at impairing the freedom, independence or integrity of any State, or at fomenting civil strife and subverting the will of the people in any State."

It seems to me that this resolution, and resolution No. 110 introduced by the Soviet Union themselves at the second session of the General Assembly and adopted unanimously on October 21st, 1947 indicate very clearly that the Council should take a serious attitude towards propaganda campaigns of the present character.

The representative of the U.A.R. has asked us to ignore the charges of the Foreign Minister of the Lebanon that the Press and Radio of the U.A.R. have been inciting the Lebanese people to revolt. He has said to us in effect: we want the Lebanese people to overthrow their Government by force, and we have encouraged them to do so, but we would not dream of actively assisting the progress by supplying arms or trained organisers to those who follow our advice, and we certainly have not done so.

In view of the precise and detailed evidence to the contrary which we have heard from the distinguished Foreign Minister of the Lebanon, this is an assertion which I must say that I find it hard to accept at face value. Quite the contrary. If I have dwelt at some length/

TEXT OF STATEMENT BY UNITED KINGDOM REPRESENTATIVE IN SECURITY COUNCIL ON 10TH JUNE

I had hoped, when the representative of Sweden introduced earlier this evening his draft resolution to provide for immediate practical action by the Security Council to deal with the present serious situation, that I would have been able to abstain from going too deeply into the issues which lie at the root of this problem. This, however, will no longer be possible in view of the speech to which we have listened from the representative of the Soviet Union. I shall be obliged to deal in some detail with the issues at stake in view of Mr. Sobolev's violent attack on the Government of Lebanon, imputations which he alleged against British policy, and the personal attacks he made on British statesmen.

I must repeat at the outset that my delegation considers that the Foreign Minister of the Lebanon has fully made out and substantiated his contention that Lebanon has suffered and is suffering interference from the U.A.R. by infiltration, smuggling of arms, attacks on frontier posts, incitement to revolt and other subversive methods.

We have not been impressed by the attempts made by the representative of the U.A.R. to deny or make light of these charges.

Our own information supports Dr. Malik's contentions, and we consider that he has amply made out his case. We have heard the representative of Iraq, from first-hand experience, attest the contentions and charges brought by Dr. Malik.

Mr. Sobolev's whole position, if my recollection of his speech earlier this evening is correct, was that the Council should pay attention only to those elements in Lebanon which are receiving support from outside, from the U.A.R. There was not a word in what he said to suggest that he was aware that the Government of Lebanon even exists. He quoted extensively from Lebanese opposition spokesmen to show that the complaint to the Security Council was unwarranted. Leaving its propriety apart this seems a rather one-sided way of proceeding since there are countries where there is no opposition to quote. But we cannot leave the proprieties aside. The United Nations is an association of governments, and Dr. Charles Malik is the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Lebanon, and has brought this complaint to the Security Council in the name of and on behalf of the Government of his country.

The burden of Dr. Loutfi's case which Mr. Sobolev supported was that the whole problem is one of internal Lebanese politics, and that the present disturbances in the country are entirely caused by legitimate internal opposition to the Government.

Mr. President, the Lebanon is a democratic country in the proper sense of the word, with a democratically elected Parliament and President. In a democracy as we understand it everyone is free to speak his own mind and there are organised opposition parties. What is more, it is not only the right but also the duty of an opposition to oppose the Government of the day by constitutional means when they consider that it is in the best interests of the country to do so. Indeed, the vigour of a constitutional opposition is not a bad yardstick by which to judge the health of the democratic system in any country.

Thus I am in no way suggesting that the existence of an opposition party in the Lebanon holding opinions strongly opposed to those of the present Government of the country is a bad thing, nor indeed an unusual thing. On the contrary.

What is disturbing is that a constitutional opposition should be incited from <u>outside</u> the country to abandon constitutional methods,

such/

documented account which we have heard from Dr. Malik can leave no doubt that there has been and is continuing, interference in many forms by the U.A.R. in the internal affairs of the Lebanon.

It is the expectation of my delegation that the Government of the Lebanon will receive support from the overwhelming majority of world opinion for the justice of its complaint and it will, I am sure, be generally agreed that the Government of the Lebanon is entitled to expect from the Council, not only sympathy and support but also assistance and redress.

We heard the Foreign Minister of the Lebanon at the outset of our proceedings this afternoon warn the Security Council that infiltration of men and smuggling of arms into the Lebanon was increasing and that the situation was now becoming very serious. We have heard the representative of United States state that his information from the area confirms the seriousness of the situation. Earlier this evening we heard the representative of Sweden make a practical proposal for immediate action. It is my hope that the Council will adopt this resolution as expeditiously as possible, as an immediate practical measure calculated to stabilise the situation and reduce the threat to peace and security.

COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS OFFICE MEMORANDUM DATED 11TH JUNE, 1958

length on this question of the propaganda from the U.A.R. inciting the people of the Lebanon to revolt against their established Government, this is not only because it is internationally wrong that this kind of warfare on the air should be employed but also because it is in such media of public communication that intentions are revealed. There are other acts - gun-running, the infiltration of armed men, attacks on frontier posts - which fill in the details of a picture framed by incitement of the people of the Lebanon to rise against their constituted Government and vilification of the members of that Government. It is disturbing to find the representative of the U.S.S.R. in full and strident support of a doctrine so subversive of everything that the United Nations stands for.

The total picture which emerges so clearly from the statements of the Foreign Minister of the Lebanon, as well as from the broadcasts and Press attacks which are on file for all to read, is a sombre and disturbing picture. It is indeed correctly and soberly described in the terms of the item on our agenda as "a situation the continuance of which is likely to endanger international peace and security". For if the international community once accepts the principle that one country may interfere at will with the internal affairs of another country with the object of overthrowing the constituted government of that country, what security will there be for any government on any continent? It is disturbing again to find the U.S.S.R. in support of these ideas.

There is an aspect of this interference which makes its character all the more disturbing. We have heard the distinguished representative of the U.A.R. imply, if he did not go so far as to say it in precise language, that it is wrong for the Government of the Lebanon to bring their complaint to the international forum of the Security Council. If Mr. Loutfi means that this question ought to have been settled in the League of Arab States, surely the answer is that the Government of the Lebanon made every effort to find a solution at the Arab League, as indeed it was their duty to do in accordance with the Charter provisions which encourage nations in the various regions of the world to settle their differences between themselves? But it is reasonable that the Government of the Lebanon should take no further steps if it has been unable to obtain satisfaction in the regional forum? I hardly think that Dr. Loufti would wish to maintain such an argument. It is true that Mr.Sobolev tried to do so, by the extraordinary assertion that there must not be any interference in the internal affairs of the Lebanon by the Security Council.

What then does the distinguished representative of the U.A.R. really mean when he takes exception to the Government of the Lebanon bringing their complaint to the Security Council? Can it be that he claims the Government of the Lebanon are in the wrong if they are not willing to do what they are told by the U.A.R.? I think that the contrary view will be generally held in this Council - that it is wrong that any country in a given area, however powerful, should assert the right to lay down the law to a smaller country in the area.

The complaint we are considering constitutes a very serious charge for one country to bring against another. There can be no doubt in our minds that this complaint would not have been lightly brought by the Government of the Lebanon to the Security Council. We are all aware of the peaceful and peace-loving nature of the Lebanon, a small and comparatively unarmed country. We all know its close attachment to the bonds of race and tradition which link the Arab world. After hearing the Foreign Minister of the Lebanon can anyone suppose that his Government would have taken the grave step of bringing this issue here had it not been that they considered themselves to be subjected to an intolerable degree of interference from another country in their internal affairs? The

documented/

such as speeches in and out of Parliament, political rallies, manifestos, etc., in favour of violence against the ordinary population and the constituted authorities, carried out with arms provided from abroad. It is profoundly disturbing that the representative of the U.S.S.R. apparently supports this principle and practice.

The distinguished representative of the U.A.R. had denied that any material assistance has been afforded to the subversive elements in the Lebanon and has contended that what is going on there is all their own work.

But he has not denied, and he cannot very well do so because the evidence is there for all to read and hear, that the Press and Radio of the U.A.R. have been inciting the people to revolt against their Government, and have been vilifying the leaders of that Government in most violent terms.

Nor, I note, has he sought to deny, presumably because he judges that it would not be credible, that the Press and Radio of the U.A.R. are effectively under the direction of the Government of the U.A.R.

Instead he has simply advised members of the Council that we ought not to concern ourselves with this aspect of the question, and has argued that since Press and Radio campaigns are not capable of endangering international peace and security that the Council is not competent to consider them.

This is an attitude which members of the Council can hardly be expected to accept. We can surely not expect that the Government of any country should submit passively to a persistent campaign of threats from the Press and Radio of a more powerful neighbour without seeking redress. As the distinguished Foreign Minister of the Lebanon pointed out, the weapon of radio propaganda is especially powerful and dangerous in the conditions in the Middle East. Nor would it be in accord with the past attitude of the United Nations for this Council to ignore this aspect of the situation.

Mr. Lodge has already drawn attention to the essentials of peace resolution No. 290 adopted at the 4th session of the General Assembly on December 1st, 1949, which called on member nations amongst other things,

> "to refrain from any threats, or acts, direct or indirect, aimed at impairing the freedom, independence or integrity of any State, or at fomenting civil strife and subverting the will of the people in any State."

It seems to me that this resolution, and resolution No. 110 introduced by the Soviet Union themselves at the second session of the General Assembly and adopted unanimously on October 21st, 1947 indicate very clearly that the Council should take a serious attitude towards propaganda campaigns of the present character.

The representative of the U.A.R. has asked us to ignore the charges of the Foreign Minister of the Lebanon that the Press and Radio of the U.A.R. have been inciting the Lebanese people to revolt. He has said to us in effect: we want the Lebanese people to overthrow their Government by force, and we have encouraged them to do so, but we would not dream of actively assisting the progress by supplying arms or trained organisers to those who follow our advice, and we certainly have not done so.

In view of the precise and detailed evidence to the contrary which we have heard from the distinguished Foreign Minister of the Lebanon, this is an assertion which I must say that I find it hard to accept at face value. Quite the contrary. If I have dwelt at some length/

POL 250/1 Mr Unkles 216

58/5474

TEXT OF STATEMENT BY UNITED KINGDOM REPRESENTATIVE IN SECURITY COUNCIL ON 10TH JUNE

I had hoped, when the representative of Sweden introduced earlier this evening his draft resolution to provide for immediate practical action by the Security Council to deal with the present serious situation, that I would have been able to abstain from going too deeply into the issues which lie at the root of this problem. This, however, will no longer be possible in view of the speech to which we have listened from the representative of the Soviet Union. I shall be obliged to deal in some detail with the issues at stake in view of Mr. Sobolev's violent attack on the Government of Lebanon, imputations which he alleged against British policy, and the personal attacks he made on British statesmen.

I must repeat at the outset that my delegation considers that the Foreign Minister of the Lebanon has fully made out and substantiated his contention that Lebanon has suffered and is suffering interference from the U.A.R. by infiltration, smuggling of arms, attacks on frontier posts, incitement to revolt and other subversive methods.

We have not been impressed by the attempts made by the representative of the U.A.R. to deny or make light of these charges.

Our own information supports Dr. Malik's contentions, and we consider that he has amply made out his case. We have heard the representative of Iraq, from first-hand experience, attest the contentions and charges brought by Dr. Malik.

Mr. Sobolev's whole position, if my recollection of his speech earlier this evening is correct, was that the Council should pay attention only to those elements in Lebanon which are receiving support from outside, from the U.A.R. There was not a word in what he said to suggest that he was aware that the Government of Lebanon even exists. He quoted extensively from Lebanese opposition spokesmen to show that the complaint to the Security Council was unwarranted. Leaving its propriety apart this seems a rather one-sided way of proceeding since there are countries where there is no opposition to quote. But we cannot leave the proprieties aside. The United Nations is an association of governments, and Dr. Charles Malik is the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Lebanon, and has brought this complaint to the Security Council in the name of and on behalf of the Government of his country.

The burden of Dr. Loutfi's case which Mr. Sobolev supported was that the whole problem is one of internal Lebanese politics, and that the present disturbances in the country are entirely caused by legitimate internal opposition to the Government.

Mr. President, the Lebanon is a democratic country in the proper sense of the word, with a democratically elected Parliament and President. In a democracy as we understand it everyone is free to speak his own mind and there are organised opposition parties. What is more, it is not only the right but also the duty of an opposition to oppose the Government of the day by constitutional means when they consider that it is in the best interests of the country to do so. Indeed, the vigour of a constitutional opposition is not a bad yardstick by which to judge the health of the democratic system in any country.

Thus I am in no way suggesting that the existence of an opposition party in the Lebanon holding opinions strongly opposed to those of the present Government of the country is a bad thing, nor indeed an unusual thing. On the contrary.

What is disturbing is that a constitutional opposition should be incited from <u>outside</u> the country to abandon constitutional methods,

such/

217

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS. TOP SECRET

OUTWARD CABLEGRAM.

COPY NUMBER 3

O.7963

CP/ENM

Sent: 20th June, 1958.
1930

TO:

Australian High Commission,
LONDON.

58/5474
30 JUN 1958
P.M.'s DEPARTMENT
SECRET REGISTRY

1347 TOP SECRET.

For Davis.

Your 1691. Lebanon.

We should be grateful if you could throw further light on United Kingdom thinking. Your paragraph 3 suggests that circumstances might arise in which intervention occurred first and "United Nations approval" sought as soon as possible thereafter. In what circumstance is it envisaged that this might happen? Our understanding of the United Kingdom position had been that as intervention would not occur (a) without prior request from the Lebanon Government (b) without prior reference to the Security Council. In the latter respect we have not been clear as to whether the United Kingdom has been thinking in terms of a simple reference without necessarily more or whether it has also seen it as a precondition of intervention that the Security Council should request help. Glad your clarification of the above points.

(Cost £17. 6.8.)

MIN & DEPT E.A.
P.M.'s (Sir Allen Brown)

24th June, 1958.

TOP SECRET

218

TOP SECRET

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS.
To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA.

Despatched:

Received:

have been approached earlier. We sincerely hoped United Nations operation would preserve independence of Lebanon. But we had to face fact that it might not succeed. If it did not succeed we would be faced by request to intervene. Should we receive such request Foreign Secretary was sure we would go to Security Council, He pointed out, however, that if a lawfully constituted Government asked its friends for support to enable it to preserve law and order it would be perfectly legal to comply.

4. Secretary General was in complete agreement about need to maintain independence of Lebanon. He indicated that his own sources tended to confirm impression that trouble in Lebanon had begun as reaction by opposition elements prepared by smuggling of arms and inflammatory broadcasts from United Arab Republic and that situation had been further exploited by U.A.R. who were not only arming and supply rebels but also giving them instructions and advice. Secretary-General thought ~~it~~ that when Lebanese elections came due some compromise might be found consistent with Lebanese continued independence.

5. Please inform Commonwealth authorities at suitably high level stressing secrecy of information.

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

219

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS.
To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA.

Despatched: 22.10 hours 20.6.58
Received: 09.35 hours 21.6.58.

TELEGRAM NO. 904 TOP SECRET IMMEDIATE

Addressed: Ottawa 1011, Canberra 904, Wellington 636.

My telegram 1000 to Ottawa.

LEBANON

Americans and we have discussed fully implications of latest developments in Lebanon. We remain convinced that if Lebanon falls to Nasser it will be resounding defeat for West. But circumstances have changed since Chamoun first approached us. Rebels have been able to represent position as one of popular revolt, Lebanese authorities have shown lamentable lack of decision and have lost control of large tracts of country, and United Nations have become actively engaged with the despatch of observers. Whatever we decided to do must now, therefore, clearly be presented in United Nations framework.

2. A personal message has now been despatched from Mr. Dulles to be conveyed orally by United States Ambassador in Beirut to President Chamoun. Message emphasises difficulty of military action in support of Lebanon in light of action already taken in United Nations and reminds President Chamoun that we have come to believe that it is almost a sine qua non that Lebanon have full recourse to orderly processes of United Nations (at least by convoking emergency session of Security Council) before finally requesting and receiving friendly military forces. Message goes on to reaffirm that we continue ready to take exceptions measures on behalf of Lebanon if such measures are absolutely essential and other factors of which President Chamoun has already bee made aware are present (for these see paragraph 4 of my telegram 969 to Ottawa). Message however urges President Chamoun to do everything in his power to avoid situation in which request for intervention might be required. Message says we believe that Lebanon has capacity to solve crisis without use of foreign military forces and we are prepared to give all appropriate assistance to this end.

3. At meeting during Secretary-General's stop in London on his way to Beirut, Foreign Secretary informed him that we were glad that United Nations was now involved and we would have fixed Security Council to .../

TOP SECRET

21st June, 1958 220

TOP SECRET

58/5474

4 JUN 1958

P.M.'S DEPARTMENT SECRET REGISTRY

G. Unkles, Esq.
Prime Minister's Department,
Canberra.

With the Compliments

of the

Official Secretary

Copy of telegram No. 904: Lebanon.

Office of the High Commissioner
for the United Kingdom,
Canberra, A.C.T.

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

TOP SECRET

COPY NUMBER 3

58/5474

SS:CM

I.10332

Dated: 20th June, 1958. 0010
Rec'd: 21st June, 1958. 1130

FROM:

Australian High Commission,
LONDON.

1715. TOP SECRET. PRIORITY.

Tange from Davis.

Lebanon.

Your 1347.

James advises that Dulles, after consultation with the United Kingdom, has made it clear to Chamoci that the United States would not consider intervention unless and until Lebanon had made further approach to the Security Council for assistance. Dulles used a phrase which was in effect 'without first exhausting the legal procedures of the United Nations'.

2. James says that the United Kingdom would wish to have United Nations backing before intervention but realise that there might be circumstances under which urgency required action before United Nations procedures completed. Also it might be that United Nations backing would not be forthcoming.

3. He also mentioned that Selwyn Lloyd was anxious despite emphasis on reference to the United Nations as a prior condition, to ensure preservation of right of friendly powers to come to the assistance of the lawful Government of a country at the country's request.

4. He mentioned that Dixon had suggested the possibility of reference back to the Security Council which continues to be seized of the Lebanon question to convert United Nations' observer team into U.N.E.F. with role of seeking to prevent the entry of further assistance to rebels. Such a United Nations' force however will presumably have to exclude major powers on analogy of U.N.E.F. for Egypt. Hammarskjoeld in discussions with Lloyd had already indicated that he would take this view. Furthermore there would still be difficulty that several hundreds of miles of the border continued in rebel hands. James said that Dixon's suggestion was attractive and would be preferable to intervention by the United Kingdom and the United States which in any event was only a last resort.

MIN. & DEPT. E.A.
P.M'S (SIR ALLEN BROWN)

21st June, 1958.

222

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

SECRET

INWARD CABLEGRAM 364/5/419.

6. Malik (Lebanese Foreign Minister) now in the United States, has been anything but helpful by letting it be known in certain quarters that he has certain United States-United Kingdom promises, while in Beirut itself Government officials have been both irresponsible and provocative.

7. The Canadians therefore believe that the best hope now is for a United Nations solution, that Hammarskjoeld's mission should be helped in every way possible, and that the time has passed for a bilateral settlement.

8. They profess to be bewildered by the part played by the British in this crisis. They believe that United States policy some months ago put ideas into Chamoun's head but they cannot believe that the United Kingdom dislike of Nasser can be such as to explain their recent policies. They tried to find out what was behind them from [redacted] when he was here last week but without success. They are inclined to think that oil considerations might be paramount.

9. Please protect.

Crocker.

MIN. & DEPT. E.A.
MIN. & DEPT. DEFENCE.
P.M.'S.

22nd June, 1958.

SECRET

223

SECRET

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

:ABK. **INWARD CABLEGRAM** I.10364/5/419.

Dated: 20th June, 1958. 1710.

FROM:

Rec'd: 22nd June, 1958. 0915.

Australian High Commission, OTTAWA.

(Transmitted via leased channel)

194. SECRET AND GUARD

58/5474

Lebanon

Smith (Minister) told me that he has sent a message on Lebanon to McDermot the contents of which the latter will be passing on to you and he asked me to see the Deputy Under Secretary who would show me some reports and give the Department's current estimate of the situation. Summary follows.

2. The Canadians have been much concerned over the Lebanon crisis. According to their information Chamoun and his group precipitated the internal crisis as a part of a plot to get the Presidency again when his present term expires. He has been encouraged to play a desperate gamble because of Malik's getting virtually a blank cheque in the form of the United Kingdom-United States promise to send armed forces to Lebanon if the Lebanese Government asked for them. The Canadians do not accept the interpretation that the crisis was caused by Nasser or the U.A.R. and still less by Moscow. They have information, which they consider reliable, that Nasser was taken by surprise in Moscow when he learnt of the outbreak in Lebanon, though no doubt he was not sorry over it.

3. They are also concerned at the role played by Israel, some evidence of which has come to them from remarks made by the Israeli Ambassador and also from remarks made earlier this week by Comay who has been here on a visit from the Israeli Foreign Office. As regards the Israeli hints that arrangements have been made for the United Kingdom and United States to use landing and other bases in Israel, the Canadians believe that the Israelis made such an offer but that it was not accepted. The Israelis had, with their usual machiavellianism, spread rumours which have given rise to the belief that it had been accepted.

4. The Canadians are also struck with the fact that the experts and the senior officials most concerned with the Middle East both in the Department of State (e.g. Wilcox) and in the Foreign Office, (e.g. Harold Beeley and Rose) have been opposed to the official United Kingdom and official United States intervention. Not only Beeley but Hayter has made clear to Smith (Acting Canadian High Commissioner, London) that insufficient consideration has been given to what was to be done inside Lebanon if Chamoun's request for military intervention were acceded to or to relations with other Arab countries afterwards or to its effects on the whole Afro- Asian world. According to the Canadians both in Washington and in London it is only the Intelligence people e.g. [redacted], who approve of recent official policy. They have reason for believing that neither the United Kingdom nor the United States Ambassadors in Beirut believe in the recent official policy of their respective Governments.

5. The Canadians also are worried over the possible role of Iraq-Jordan and of France (e.g. Malraux' announcement that if there is to be any intervention by the United Kingdom and United States, France must be in too.

SECRET

..2..

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS. CONFIDENTIAL

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

I. 10300

obtained in Europe.

6. Regarding the movement of additional United States Marine Corps battalion to the East Mediterranean, Bergus commented this was just a precautionary measure. The United States position on possible intervention in Lebanon was still as expressed by Dulles in his press conferences of 20th and 27th May, namely that this should be undertaken only in the last resort. Because of the gravity of such a step the United States would seek to exhaust every recourse through the United Nations beforehand.

7. The Lebanese wanted to turn the United Nations Observation Force into "police" force to seal the frontier. It was natural that they should want to expand the United Nations Observation Force functions in this way. However, if the situation became worse Bergus did not rule out the possibility that the United States would support such development as alternative to intervention.

8. Bergus mentioned that Nasser had taken the line with the United States Ambassador in Cairo (Hare) that the situation in Lebanon had been contrived by the United States as a means to attack the U.A.R. Hare had replied in the firmest terms that the United States wanted normal relations with the U.A.R. but that the U.A.R. should have known in advance what the United States attitude would be when it encouraged Dissidents in a neighbouring country.

9. Bergus commented that in the United States view the best solution in Lebanon would still be purely a Lebanese One. In this connection there were reports that cease fire was being canvassed between the Government and Dissidents to last up to 24th July when the Lebanese Parliament was due to be convened to consider election of new President. Bergus said that it was still too early to assess likelihood of such cease-fire being arranged.

MIN. & DEPT. E.A. 23rd June, 1958.
MIN. & DEPT. DEFENCE
P.M.'s

CONFIDENTIAL

225

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS. CONFIDENTIAL

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

58/5474
24 JUN 1958
P.M.'S DEPARTMENT
REGISTRY

JD:SS

I. 10423/24

Dated: 20th June, 1958
2050

FROM:

Rec'd: 22nd June, 1958
1230

Australian Embassy,
W A S H I N G T O N.

(via leased channel).

1010. CONFIDENTIAL.

Repeated Austunat, and copies to London (for External) and Ottawa.

Lebanon.

Following from Bergus (Israel-Lebanon Affairs) on 20th June.

2. The United States believed the Lebanese Army had the capacity to crush the rebellion but it was not doing so. The danger was that as time went by rebel strength would increase and the Army would no longer be able to cope with the situation. At present the Army was doing little more than contain the Dissidents within perimeters and often not doing this very well. Also it was still allowing supplies into Dissidents-held areas.

3. Attempted break out of Dissidents from the Moslem quarter of Beirut over the last weekend had at no point been dangerous. The fact that the Army had only sustained seven casualities in opposing the break out was evidence of this. The objective of this Dissident action appeared to have been to force the Army to relieve its pressure in the Shouf area where it had been moving into the mountains. Bergus was inclined to discount press suggestions that it was an attempt primarily to unseat the Government before Hammerskjoeld arrived.

4. If the Army could be induced to act more vigorously and the United Nations Observer Force became effective quickly the position of the Dissidents could be reduced in short order.

5. The United States Embassy Beirut had not had any contact with Hammerskjoeld since his arrival there. But his tentative views before leaving New York were that observer force should be built up quickly to a number of about two hundred. The State Department thought this number might be insufficient and it was awaiting with interest views which Hammerskjoeld had developed during his visit to Beirut. What the United States wanted to see was early flow of reports from the United Nations Observer Force. Bergus mentioned that the United States had promised every possible material support to assist United Nations Observers. Two helicopters were ready for air transport to Lebanon when the United Nations could find pilots for them. The United States could supply pilots but Hammerskjoeld wished at this stage to avoid major power participation in the Observer Force. The UnitedStates was also willing to provide light aircraft which Hammerskjoeld thought might be needed but it was understood these were being

CONFIDENTIAL

/2......

226

TOP SECRET

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

COPY NUMBER

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

the dangers of Western intervention in Lebanon.

5. It is possible that in response to an appeal from Nasser the Soviet Government would consider the desirability of sending troops into Syria ostensibily to guarantee her integrity. They might be tempted to do so not only in order to reinforce Syria against any development of Lebanese crisis that might threaten her but in order to enhance their standing in Middle East and to obtain a foothold there. We believe however that these considerations would be outweighed by their desire not to risk involving Soviet forces in fighting in the Middle East. If Soviet Governme nt felt called on to make some covert response to an appeal by Nasser this would probably be limited to promising the despatch of further supplies of arms and to references in press and elsewhere to assembling of volunteers.

MIN. & DEPT. E.A.
P.M's. (SIR ALLEN BROWN)

21st June, 1958.

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

COPY NUMBER 3

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

58/5474

I:10338

SDP

Dated: 21st June, 1958.
0010

Rec'd: 21st June, 1958.
1130.

FROM:

Australian High Commission,
LONDON.

1713. TOP SECRET.

For Tange from Davis.

Lebanon.

My 1691.

1. James, Commonwealth Relations Office, in response to the question referred to in paragraph 2 of my 1691 gave me today a paper prepared by the Foreign Office and Commonwealth Relations Office on possible Soviet reactions to action in Lebanon. The paper is set out in the following paragraphs:-

(i) "Soviet policy in the Middle East has been and still is elimnation of Western influence and substitution for it of Soviet protection. The Soviet Government will lose no opportunity to support indirectly and by covert means any nation pursuing an anti-Western policy. They will however be careful in almost all circumstances to avoid any action which might carry the risk of provoking general war. Developments in Lebanon including possible United States/United Kingdom intervention do not in our opinion provide an exception to this proposition.

(ii) Fall of the present Lebanese Government and establishment of a Government sympathetic to the United Arab Republic would be in the interests of the Soviet Union and their long-term aim of eliminating Western influence in Middle East but we doubt whether the Soviet Government would consider Lebanon of such importance that they would think it necessary to become actively involved in supporting opposition to a United States/United Kingdom intervention once it had been launched, thereby risking a blow to their prestige if United States/United Kingdom support should be successful.

(iii) A United States/United Kingdom intervention in Lebanese Affairs even if at the request of the Lebanese Government will offer the Soviet Union good opportunities for stepping up their propaganda drive to undermine Western influence in the Middle East. They will of course attempt to direct their propaganda so as to turn against West Arab opinion in states, such as Iraq, whose Governments might initially approve intervention designed to support present Lebanese Government. This task would be made very easy for them if French forces should participate in intervention.

4. Already there has been evidence in a Tass statement of Soviet intention to stir up trouble for the West by dwelling on

TOP SECRET

228

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

58/5474

24 JUN 1958

P.M.'s DEPARTMENT SECRET REGISTRY

GW:SS

I. 10397

Dated: 21st June, 1958 1415

FROM:

Rec'd: 22nd June, 1958 0830

Australian Embassy,
R A N G O O N.

113. UNCLASSIFIED.

Troops for Lebanon.

In answer to a press question U Nu said that the Foreign Office had advised him to consider providing troops, but added that the Army would have to decide and "if they cannot spare the personnel, I shall have to say we are sorry."

The War Office has told the Service Attache they are trying to meet the request which is receiving "very favourable consideration," but the final decision not yet made.

MIN. & DEPT. E.A.
MIN. & DEPT. DEFENCE
P.M.'s

23rd June, 1958.

229

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS

To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA

Despatched :

Received :

e.g. captured weapons to prove the fact of United Arab Republics (U.A.R.) intervention.

6. (To Ottawa, Canberra, Wellington, Pretoria, Salisbury). Please inform Commonwealth authorities. High Commissioners in London informed.

7. (To Delhi, Karachi, Colombo, Accra, Kuala Lumpur). You have discretion to inform Commonwealth authorities.

SECRETARY OF STATE.

230

'S'

TELEGRAM

POL.250/1.

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS
To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA

58/5474

Despatched: 04.40. 21st June, 1958.

Received: 08.30. 23rd June, 1958.

PRIORITY.

TELEGRAM CIRCULAR W NUMBER 450. CONFIDENTIAL.

Repeated United Kingdom High Commissioners Delhi, Karachi, Colombo, Accra, Kuala Lumpur.

My telegram circular W No.441.

LEBANON.

Beirut has been quiet during last few days. On 19th June there were one or two explosions only and a small amount of intermittent shooting. A clash occurred between the Left Wing Armenian Party (said now to have received instructions from Damascus to come out openly for the Opposition) and the Right Wing Phalange Party but there were no casualties.

2. On night of 19/20th June Tripoli was quieter than usual after a fair amount of shooting on previous day. The military garrisons holding positions north of Tripoli on the Halba-Abde road have been withdrawn and brought to re-enforce the garrisons in Beirut and Tripoli.

3. The Bekaa and South Lebanon areas have been quiet. Lebanese forces have captured a 120 mm mortar gun at Hasbaya east of Marjayoun.

4. United Nations observer teams are going about the country but Lebanese military authorities are unable to say yet whether they are having any effect. In reply to a query as to whether the effect of the observers might not at least be to force bands to move by night across the border military authorities have stated that the Lebanese Air Force had already succeeded in achieving this.

5. President Chamoun has had two meetings with Mr. Hammarskjoeld and is believed to have produced before him a number of captured Syrians (in uniform) as well as other evidence

/...

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

231

INWARD CABLEGRAM. CONFIDENTIAL

58/5474

I. 10524.

Dated: 23rd June, 1958.
2105.
Rec'd: 24th June, 1958.
1130.

FROM:

Australian High Commission,
LONDON.

1729. CONFIDENTIAL

Repeated Washington 104.

From External.

Lebanon.

United Kingdom Ambassador Moscow in message sent last week commented as follows - 'although the Soviet press continues to play up reports of alleged preparations for western intervention there is as yet no sign of a propaganda offensive comparable with that mounted during the Turko-Syrian affair last autumn. Present relatively passive line probably means that Soviet Government feel satisfied that events in Lebanon are developing favourably for them without any overt effort on their part and do not want to show too blatantly their interest in the rebels'success. Any Western intervention must however be expected to reproduce a sharp Soviet reaction'.

2. We have also seen United Kingdom telegrams reporting articles in 'Pravda' and 'People's Daily' Peking which warn that intervention will provoke against them such forces as they will be unable to reckon with' ('Pravda') and 'that support given by peace-loving forces to Lebanon will be sufficient to smash any imperialist plots' ('People's Daily').

MIN.&DEPT. E.A.
MIN.&DEPT. DEFENCE
P.M's

24th May, 1958.

232

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

CONFIDENTIAL

58/5474

26 JUN 1958

MG:ABK. I.10546.

Dated: 24th June, 1958. 1825.

FROM: Rec'd: 25th June, 1958. 0830.

Australian Legation,
TEL AVIV.

45. CONFIDENTIAL.

Lebanon.

Following are additional thoughts particularly in the view of the (mission Ø).

2. Developments in immediate future will be much affected by Hammarskjoeld's views. United Nations observers seemed at first to be treating the government and the rebels as parties of equal status.

3. Behaviour of United States and United Kingdom has not been particularly effective and morale of Jordan and Iraq may be adversely affected in consequence.

4. If Lebanon gets into the orbit of U.A.R., the West will never make up ground so lost.

5. Israel is neither immediately nor directly involved but could be adversely affected by the mounting total of arms reaching Arabs from all sources, as well as by changes in the quality of its frontier relations with Lebanon, and encirclement (apart from the Jordan border) by the U.A.R.

Ballard.

MIN. & DEPT. E.A.
MIN. & DEPT. DEFENCE.
P.M.'S. 25th June, 1958.

CONFIDENTIAL

1.

233

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

TOP SECRET

COPY NUMBER 3

BD:CM

I.10587

Dated: 24th June, 1958. 2130

Rec'd: 25th June, 1958. 0830

FROM:

Australian High Commission, LONDON.

58/5474

3 0 JUN 1958

P.M.'S. DEPARTMENT SECRET REGISTRY

1743. TOP SECRET.

Repeated Washington 106.

From External.

Lebanon.

James, Commonwealth Relations Office advises that United Kingdom is at present in close consultation with United States on Lebanon, particularly with regard to United Kingdom view of the dangers involved in United States/United Kingdom intervention of which they are becoming increasingly conscious. United Kingdom is placing increasing emphasis on prior necessity of Security Council Debate and some form of United Nations cover should in/the last resort, some form of United Kingdom/United States intervention be deemed necessary. They however have discouraged Chamoun from asking for assistance and feel that the next important step is to persuade Chamoun that he and the Government should bring forward the name of a presidential successor and provide full backing. In the meantime United Kingdom will support increase of United Nations observer group and await further discussions with Hammarskjoeld on any other possible United Nations action.

MIN. & DEPT. E.A.
SIR ALLEN BROWN (P.M'S)

25th June, 1958.

TOP SECRET

234

CONFIDENTIAL

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

OUTWARD CABLEGRAM.

SHA:SS

O. 8117

58/5474

3 - JUL 1958

Sent: 25th June, 1958
1700

TO:

(Via leased channel).

Australian Embassy,
WASHINGTON.

953. CONFIDENTIAL.

Lebanon. Your 1010 Paragraph 5.

Please telegraph relevant extracts Dulles' two press statements 20th and 27th May.

MIN. & DEPT. E.A.
MIN. & DEPT. DEFENCE
P.M.'s

26th June, 1958.

TOP SECRET

235

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS.
To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA.

Despatched: 22.30 hours 23.6.58.

Received: 11.30 hours 24.6.58.

TELEGRAM NO. W.453 TOP SECRET PRIORITY

Addressed: Ottawa, Canberra, Wellington,

Repeated: Others.

My telegram 1011.

LEBANON

Conversion of observer group in Lebanon into United Nations Force which could help to seal frontiers against infiltration and act as restraining influence on rebels within country, might do much to assist towards bringing about atmosphere favourable to political solution.

2. Americans and we are considering possibility of discussing step of this kind with the Secretary-General of United Nations and Lebanese Government.

3. In view of ~~XXX~~ Secretary-General's interpretation of existing resolution, creation of Force would require further resolution of Security Council. This might be introduced as a result of recommendation by Secretary-General on his return from his visit to Middle East. Alternatively Lebanese Government could ask for meeting of Security Council at which they would request despatch of United Nations Force. If resolution were vetoed, depending on support which might be expected in light of circumstances in which it had been introduced, matter could then be taken to General Assembly under United for Peace procedure.

4. (To Ottawa, Canberra, Wellington only) Please inform Commonwealth authorities at suitably high level stressing secrecy of information.

TOP SECRET

25th June, 1958.

TOP SECRET

236

G. Unkles, Esq.
Prime Minister's Department,
Canberra.

58/5474

7 - JUL 1958
P.M.'s DEPARTMENT
SECRET REGISTRY

With the Compliments
of the
Official Secretary

Copy of telegram W.453: Lebanon.

Office of the High Commissioner
for the United Kingdom,
Canberra, A.C.T.

POL.250/1

CONFIDENTIAL

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS

To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA

Despatched:

Received:

calling themselves representatives of "Free Lebanon Territory". An Indian plane carrying Mr. Dayal, Indian member of three man group controlling observers was forced by Migs to turn back on 21st June from near Lebanese frontier (after obtaining clearance from Damascus for flight to Beirut) and kept at Damascus airport until after dark.

5. Ottawa, Canberra, Wellington, Pretoria. Please inform Commonwealth authorities. Four Commonwealth High Commissioners in London have been informed. Salisbury take similar action.

6. (To Delhi, Karachi, Colombo, Accra, Kuala Lumpur.) You have discretion to inform Commonwealth authorities.

SECRETARY OF STATE.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

TELEGRAM

From: THE ~~SECRETARY~~ ACTING SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS
To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA

Despatched: 22.30. 23rd June, 1958.
Received: 11.30. 24th June, 1958.

PRIORITY.

TELEGRAM CIRCULAR W. NO. 452. CONFIDENTIAL.

Addressed United Kingdom High Commissioners Ottawa, Canberra, Wellington, Pretoria, Salisbury. Repeated other posts.

My Circular W. No. 450.

LEBANON.

There have been no major incidents in Lebanon in period since report contained in my telegram under reference and last weekend throughout the country as a whole was the quietest since the troubles began.

2. There has been some firing in Beirut where army have demolished two buildings from which sniping had taken place. There has also been sporadic shooting in Tripoli and some exchanges of fire between army and rebels at Baalbek. (The capture of a 120 mm. gun reported in my telegram under reference has now been denied).

3. There are rumours of disagreements between Syrian and Egyptian officers on the one hand and Lebanese commanders on the other concerning conduct of rebel operations in Beirut. There are also believed to be between 100-150 Palestinian and Syrian Commandos in Basta quarter of Beirut and cold war of rumours is going on about date for a further outbreak of violence. Army however is now more in evidence and seems more confident of dealing with any such eventuality.

4. There are now 50 United Nations observers in Lebanon with another 50 expected in the course of this week. They are establishing posts at various points in the country. Two (Dutch) United Nations observers were stopped north of Baalbek on evening of 21st June and forced to turn back by armed gang

CONFIDENTIAL

/calling

239

CONFIDENTIAL

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS

To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA

Despatched:

Received:

calling themselves representatives of "Free Lebanon Territory". An Indian plane carrying Mr. Dayal, Indian member of three man group controlling observers was forced by Migs to turn back on 21st June from near Lebanese frontier (after obtaining clearance from Damascus for flight to Beirut) and kept at Damascus airport until after dark.

5. Ottawa, Canberra, Wellington, Pretoria. Please inform Commonwealth authorities. Four Commonwealth High Commissioners in London have been informed. Salisbury take similar action.

6. (To Delhi, Karachi, Colombo, Accra, Kuala Lumpur.) You have discretion to inform Commonwealth authorities.

SECRETARY OF STATE.

CONFIDENTIAL

POL.250/1 240

CONFIDENTIAL

TELEGRAM

From: THE ~~SECRETARY~~ ACTING SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS

To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA

Despatched: 22.30. 23rd June, 1958.

Received: 11.30. 24th June, 1958.

PRIORITY.

TELEGRAM CIRCULAR W. NO. 452. CONFIDENTIAL.

Addressed United Kingdom High Commissioners Ottawa, Canberra, Wellington, Pretoria, Salisbury. Repeated other posts.

My Circular W. No. 450.

LEBANON.

There have been no major incidents in Lebanon in period since report contained in my telegram under reference and last weekend throughout the country as a whole was the quietest since the troubles began.

2. There has been some firing in Beirut where army have demolished two buildings from which sniping had taken place. There has also been sporadic shooting in Tripoli and some exchanges of fire between army and rebels at Baalbek. (The capture of a 120 mm. gun reported in my telegram under reference has now been denied).

3. There are rumours of disagreements between Syrian and Egyptian officers on the one hand and Lebanese commanders on the other concerning conduct of rebel operations in Beirut. There are also believed to be between 100-150 Palestinian and Syrian Commandos in Basta quarter of Beirut and cold war of rumours is going on about date for a further outbreak of violence. Army however is now more in evidence and seems more confident of dealing with any such eventuality.

4. There are now 50 United Nations observers in Lebanon with another 50 expected in the course of this week. They are establishing posts at various points in the country. Two (Dutch) United Nations observers were stopped north of Baalbek on evening of 21st June and forced to turn back by armed gang

/calling

CONFIDENTIAL

SECRET

POL. 250/1 241

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS

To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA

Despatched: 22.30. 23rd June, 1958.

Received: 11.30. 24th June, 1958.

PRIORITY.

TELEGRAM NO. 916. SECRET.

United Kingdom High Commissioners Ottawa No. 1021, Canberra No. 916, Wellington. No. 647.

My Circular W. No. 452.

LEBANON.

Following is further information about situation in Lebanon of more secret nature than that contained in my telegram under reference which you may pass to Canadian/Australian/New Zealand authorities on same basis as information contained in my telegram No. 994 to Ottawa.

2. BEGINS. There have been persistent reports that the leaders of the extreme Opposition in Lebanon no longer fully control their supporters. Direction is said to have passed into United Arab Republic (U.A.R.) (and in particular Syrian) hands.

Since report in my telegram No. 1000 to Ottawa President Chamoun has told the United States Ambassador that he does not feel it would be wise to take steps at this juncture to remove General Chehab from the command of the army. The General's attitude is still not clear but he has told the United States Ambassador that he is now more confident of being able to control the security situation in Beirut.

ENDS.

SECRETARY OF STATE.

SECRET

SECRET

POL. 250/1 Mr Unkles
~~Mr Unkles~~ 242
~~Mr Coulter~~

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS
To: THE ACTING HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA

Despatched: 22.30. 23rd June, 1958.
Received: 11.30. 24th June, 1958.

58/5474
7 - JUL 1958

PRIORITY.

TELEGRAM NO. 916. SECRET.

United Kingdom High Commissioners Ottawa No. 1021, Canberra No. 916, Wellington. No. 647.

My Circular W. No. 452.

LEBANON.

Following is further information about situation in Lebanon of more secret nature than that contained in my telegram under reference which you may pass to Canadian/Australian/New Zealand authorities on same basis as information contained in my telegram No. 994 to Ottawa.

2. BEGINS. There have been persistent reports that the leaders of the extreme Opposition in Lebanon no longer fully control their supporters. Direction is said to have passed into United Arab Republic (U.A.R.) (and in particular Syrian) hands.

Since report in my telegram No. 1000 to Ottawa President Chamoun has told the United States Ambassador that he does not feel it would be wise to take steps at this juncture to remove General Chehab from the command of the army. The General's attitude is still not clear but he has told the United States Ambassador that he is now more confident of being able to control the security situation in Beirut.

ENDS.

SECRETARY OF STATE.

SECRET

243

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS. CONFIDENTIAL

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

58/5474.

27 JUN 1958

P.M.'s DEPARTMENT SECRET REGISTRY

SHA:SS

I. 10690

Dated: 25th June, 1958 1910

FROM: Rec'd: 26th June, 1958 1158

Australian Embassy,
W A S H I N G T O N.

(Via leased channel).

1035. CONFIDENTIAL.

Lebanon.

Your 953. Our 760 reported relevant extracts from Dulles' press conference 20th May. Regret phrase "and 27th May" was included in our telegram 1010 in error. Dulles did not hold a press conference on that day.

2. You will have seen statements issued by the State Department on 17th May (our 745 refers). Some references were made to this subject in Dulles' press conference of 17th June. We presume you will have received transcript by now but please advise whether you wish us to telegraph extracts.

MIN. & DEPT. E.A.
MIN. & DEPT. DEFENCE
P.M.'s

26th June, 1958.

Mr Unkles

CONFIDENTIAL

Sx

244

POL.250/1

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS

To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA

58/5474

27 JUN 1958

P.M.'S DEPARTMENT SECRET REGISTRY

Despatched: 03.25 hours. 26th June, 1958.

Received: 15.00 hours 26th June, 1958.

PRIORITY

TELEGRAM CIRCULAR W. NO. 461. CONFIDENTIAL

Addressed United Kingdom High Commissioners Canberra, Wellington Pretoria, Salisbury W. 461. Repeated Others.

My telegram circular W. No. 452.

LEBANON.

The situation in Beirut remains quiet. There was sporadic firing on the evening of the 23rd June but on the 24th June the town was largely open and business was being carried on in most quarters. There has been some further shooting in Tripoli and artillery has been used against a few houses from which sniping had taken place.

2. There is no change in the situation North of Tripoli and in the Northern Bekaa. Troops at Baalbek have been fired upon. Lebanese Army Headquarters believe that next attempt by Opposition will take place on Baalbek in near future. There is no reason to doubt that Army could deal with any attacks which are possible.

3. The Lebanese Air Force whose morale is reported to be excellent is continuing to support Government ground forces. Supply drops of fuel and ammunition have been successfully carried out during this month.

4. Ottawa, Canberra, Wellington, Pretoria and Salisbury. Please inform Commonwealth authorities. Five Commonwealth High Commissioners in London have been informed.

5. To Delhi, Karachi, Colombo, Accra, Kuala Lumpur. You have discretion to inform Commonwealth authorities.

SECRETARY OF STATE.

Copy: DEF. 27/6/58

27 JUN 1958

CONFIDENTIAL

TOP SECRET

245

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS.

To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA.

Despatched: 03.25 hours 26.4.58

Received: 15.00 hours 26.6.58

TELEGRAM CIRCULAR W.460 TOP SECRET PRIORITY

Repeated: Delhi, Colombo, Accra, Kuala Lumpur.

My W.453.

LEBANON

Present indications are that Secretary-General of United Nations is doubtful of feasibility of forming a United Nations Force of the kind referred to in paragraph 1 of my telegram under reference. In his view such a force to be effective would require about 7,500 men.

2. But there is wide gap between last figure and present United Nations Observer Team of 100 men. And even some substantial reinforcement of Observer Team would in itself help to obtain better control of frontier. Subject, therefore, to ideas which Secretary-General may himself propound, it is proposed that United States and United Kingdom representatives at New York should on his return urge on him need to step up United Nations effort.

3. (Ottawa, Canberra, Wellington only) Please inform Commonwealth authorities at suitably high level, stressing secrecy of information.

Secretary a/B

Mr [illegible]. [illegible]

TOP SECRET

26th June, 1958

246

TOP SECRET

G. Unkles, Esq.
Prime Minister's Department,
Canberra.

A.T.G.
24

38/5474
27 JUN 1958
P.M'S. DEPARTMENT
SECRET REGISTRY

With the Compliments

of the

Official Secretary

Copy of telegram W.460: Lebanon.

Office of the High Commissioner
for the United Kingdom,
Canberra, A.C.T.

POL.250/1

247

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS

To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA

Despatched:

Received:

2. In answer to subsequent question Foreign Secretary reaffirmed (see Hansard of 19th May column 880) that United Kingdom Government "would not act contrary to the Charter or to the established rules of international law".

3. Copies of Hansard follow by bag.

SECRETARY OF STATE.

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS
To: THE ACTING HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA

Despatched: 17.00. 26th June, 1958.
Received: 08.30. 27th June, 1958.

PRESBE.

TELEGRAM CIRCULAR W. NO. 464.

My Circular W. No. 461.

Following is text of statement made in Parliament by Foreign Secretary in answer to several questions on 25th June. BEGINS.

"As a result of the submission of the matter to the Security Council United Nations Observers have been sent to the Lebanon and are attempting to operate there.

Before he left New York the Secretary General circulated a report dated 11th June on the implementation of the Security Council Resolution. A copy of this is available in the library. I had a talk with Mr. Hammarskjoeld on 18th June when he passed through London. I assured him of our full support in implementing the Security Council Resolution. We await any recommendations he may put forward as a result of his visit to the Middle East.

With regard to arms I have nothing to add to the answer my Right Honourable Friend gave to the Honourable Member for Merthyr Tydfil on 11th June. No request for military intervention has been received from the Government of the Lebanon.

The answer to the question asked by the Honourable Member for Newcastle-under-Lyme (asking for a statement on consultations between United States Secretary of State and British representatives on Lebanon situation on 15th June) is no sir." ENDS.

/2. In

249

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS

To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA

Despatched:

Received:

2. In answer to subsequent question Foreign Secretary reaffirmed (see Hansard of 19th May column 880) that United Kingdom Government "would not act contrary to the Charter or to the established rules of international law".

3. Copies of Hansard follow by bag.

SECRETARY OF STATE.

POL.250/1

250

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS

To: THE ACTING HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA

58/5474

27 JUN 1958

P.M.'s DEPARTMENT SECRET REGISTRY

Despatched: 17.00. 26th June, 1958.

Received: 08.30. 27th June, 1958.

PRESSE.

TELEGRAM CIRCULAR W. NO. 464.

My Circular W. No. 461.

Following is text of statement made in Parliament by Foreign Secretary in answer to several questions on 25th June. BEGINS.

"As a result of the submission of the matter to the Security Council United Nations Observers have been sent to the Lebanon and are attempting to operate there.

Before he left New York the Secretary General circulated a report dated 11th June on the implementation of the Security Council Resolution. A copy of this is available in the library. I had a talk with Mr. Hammarskjoeld on 18th June when he passed through London. I assured him of our full support in implementing the Security Council Resolution. We await any recommendations he may put forward as a result of his visit to the Middle East.

With regard to arms I have nothing to add to the answer my Right Honourable Friend gave to the Honourable Member for Merthyr Tydfil on 11th June. No request for military intervention has been received from the Government of the Lebanon.

The answer to the question asked by the Honourable Member for Newcastle-under-Lyme (asking for a statement on consultations between United States Secretary of State and British representatives on Lebanon situation on 15th June) is no sir." ENDS.

/2. In

251

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS. RESTRICTED

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

CW:CM

I.10731

58/5474
27 JUN 1958

Dated: 26th June, 1958.
1300
Rec'd: 27th June, 1958.
0830

FROM:

Australian Embassy,
RANGOON.

116. RESTRICTED.

My telegram 113. Troops for Lebanon.

Burma requested to provide 15 officers 100 other ranks for Lebanon but unable to meet request.

Agreed to provide 5 officers of whom first departed by air June 24th, others following shortly

-----

MIN. & DEPT. E.A.
MIN. & DEPT. DEFENCE
P.M'S

27th June, 1958.

RESTRICTED

252

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM. CONFIDENTIAL

MG:CM I.10766

Dated: 26th June, 1958. 1735
Rec'd: 27th June, 1958. 0830

FROM:

Australian High Commission,
NEW DELHI.

58/5474
2 7 JUN 1958
P.M'S. DEPARTMENT SECRET REGISTRY

269. CONFIDENTIAL.

Lebanon.

Last weekend there was some excitement about Lebanon in Indian newspapers followed by an alarmist press conference given by Ambassador of United Arab Republic which will be reported to you by bag. This however came at a time when tension had started to reduce. Nevertheless the foreign Secretary asked the Ambassador to call and explained to him the Indian view that his government was misinterpreting and exaggerating the attitude of Americans in Lebanon. General Dutt urged on Abou-Richeh the need for moderation without specifically taking him to task for his press interview.

2. I gather Dayal has reported that the Americans have been restraining Chamoun both consistently and effectively especially from making a request for intervention by armed force.

3. Further reports by savingram.

Heydon.

MIN. & DEPT. E.A.
P.M'S

27th June, 1958.

CONFIDENTIAL

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS. CONFIDENTIAL

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

I. 10796/97

over the last week. There was sporadic fighting in the Baalbek Valley. In the Shouf region there was an unofficial truce between Jumblat's Druse Tribesmen and the Army. In Beirut, the Dissidents were still contained in the Muslim quarter. In Tripoli, fighting was reported but the position was unclear. The Lebanese Government had been expecting a concerted Dissident effort for the last few days and if this occurred it might well lead to an appeal to the United States and United Kingdom for intervention.

7. The United Nations Observation Force appeared to be settling down to its work and now numbered between 85 and 90 members. The United States had delivered two helicopters and the State Department understood that some light aircraft had also arrived for use by the United Nations Observers.

8. The Lebanese Army was still doing little more than containing Dissidents within the perimeters, but the Army had improved its dispositions to meet any attempted breakouts. Negotiations between the Government and the Dissidents were in stalemate.

9. The Russian position on Lebanon had hardened in the last few days and Bergus said that while he was no expert on Soviet affairs, it appeared to him that the Russians had now decided that there was little possibility of Western intervention and were seeking to gain maximum propaganda advantage. They might also be concerned to divert world press attention away from such issues as the execution of Nagy and their change of position on the Geneva Talks.

MIN. & DEPT. E.A.
MIN. & DEPT. DEFENCE
P.M.'s

27th June, 1958.

CONFIDENTIAL

254

CONFIDENTIAL

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

58/5474

SHA:SS

I. 10796/97

Dated: 26th June, 1958 2115

FROM:

Rec'd: 27th June, 1958 1615

Australian Embassy,
W A S H I N G T O N.

(Via leased channel).

1047. CONFIDENTIAL.

Repeated Austunat, information copies to London (for External) and Ottawa.

Lebanon.

The following from Bergus (Israel-Lebanon Affairs) on 26th June. Contrary to press reports, Lebanese had not yet made a formal request for an extension of the functions of the United Nations Observation Force. Chamoun had canvassed the idea with Hammarskjoeld, but the latter had discouraged it in terms of technical difficulties of raising and maintaining a United Nations Force to seal the border.

2. Hammarskjoeld had been careful to avoid contact with Western diplomatic missions while he was in Middle East, and little was known as yet about views he had developed. He had even refused to comment to Chamoun on the nature of his discussions with Nasser. So far as the State Department was aware there was no substance in press reports that Hammarskjoeld had been asked to convey proposals to the Lebanese from Nasser. What advance indications there were of Hammarskjoeld's views suggested that he might make a plea for time to give the United Nations Observation Force a chance to work.

3. The United States position with regard to intervention was still as expressed by Dulles in his press conference on 20th May and statements issued by the State Department on 17th May (our 1035 refers). It was difficult to forecast the circumstances in which the United States might intervene, but the essential conditions would be :-

(a) Formal request from the Lebanese Government for intervention (which had not yet been made despite press stories to contrary): and

(b) Exhaustion of recourse to the United Nations.

4. In answer to question whether (b) would include the calling of a Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly under Article 51, Bergus said such a possibility would depend entirely on the circumstances.

5. Bergus commented that there were a great many arguments against intervention, but if a formal request from the Lebanese Government was received it would be difficult to dismiss it because of the implications this would have for all small countries under attack from larger neighbours.

6. The situation in Lebanon had not changed much

CONFIDENTIAL

/2......

255

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM. I.10803

Sent: 26th June, 1958
1830
Rec'd: 27th June, 1958
1655

BD

Transmitted via leased channel

58/5474
30 JUN 1958
P.M.'s DEPARTMENT SECRET REGISTRY

FROM:

Australian Mission to the United Nations,
NEW YORK.

NY481. UNCLASSIFIED

Lebanon.

Following is the text of a communique issued to the press today by the United Nations Observation Group in Lebanon:-

"The United Nations Observation Group in Lebanon began its work as a fully constituted body on 19th June, 1958 when the United Nations Secretary-General opened its first meeting at Council Headquarters in Beirut.

The Group gave its attention first to a review of the arrangement that had been made, prior to its arrival, for the organisation of a body of military observers in the field and to the additional steps required for increasing its strength to that of a fully operational group of 100 military observers. There are at present 94 observers in the field supported by 74 vehicles and appropriate administrative staff.

These arrangements which represent the first organisational stage have now been completed. Regular reports are being received from the Observers in the field which, together with information brought to the Observation Group's attention from other sources, are used by the Observation Group in directing the continuing activities of the Military Observers in the field.

These dispositions represent the steps which are being taken by the Observation Group to carry out the mandate given to it by the Security Council. The Observation Group believes that the progressive implementation of that mandate will contribute greatly to the creation of conditions within Lebanon which will make possible the solution by the Lebanese people themselves of the internal problems which face the country at the present time".

MIN. & DEPT. E.A.
P.M'S.

28th June, 1958

256

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

SECRET

4. Admittedly this would be an exercise in "brinkmanship" and would entail certain risks but Dixon did not think the Soviet would react militarily. It was important to save Lebanon because what was involved was not so much the future of Lebanon as the independence of Iraq and the Baghdad Pact. There was close co-operation and understanding between London and Washington and Dixon could not resist a certain satisfaction at the thought that the United States might find itself co-operating with the United Kingdom in a military action similar to that which it had condemned in the United Nations at the time of Suez.

5. Of course, owing to Chamoun's weakness the situation in which the United Kingdom and United States would be ready to use force may not develop. Dixon remarked on the possibility that Chamoun will soon be replaced by a newly elected President who will hold the situation for a few months but then perhaps move to enter the U.A.R. towards the end of the year.

6. I assume that you have been more fully informed by the United Kingdom on their thinking than at the time of Suez and havebeen giving consideration to the problems that will confront Australia if there is

(a) A proposal for a United Nations emergency force and

(b) An independent armed action by United Kingdom and United States without United Nations endorsement. I confess I have some apprehensions that the United Kingdom may again overestimate the degree of United States support for such action and underestimate the reaction of world public opinion and particularly the effects upon her position in Asia. While expecting that in such an event we would support the United Kingdom action, I would also expect this to have adverse effects upon her own position with Asian members of the United Nations. I would be glad to have some indication of your thinking.

MIN. & DEPT. E.A.
P.M'S.

28th June, 1958

SECRET

257

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

SECRET

I.10866/7/8

Sent: 27th June, 1958 58/5474
1420
Rec'd: 28th June, 1958 30 JUN 1958
1152

P.M.'s DEPARTMENT SECRET REGISTRY

BD

Transmitted via leased channel

FROM

Australian Mission to the United Nations,
NEW YORK.

NY485. SECRET PRIORITY.

From Walker.

Lebanon.

Dixon, who had just seen Hammarskjoeld on his return from Lebanon told me at dinner at my place last night that Hammarskjoeld apparently believed he had reached some sort of standstill agreement with Nasser for the next week or so, with which Chamoun also seemed to have agreed. (However, there were reports that Chamoun, in view of worsening of situation was not actively seeking increased assistance from United Nations). One difficulty, according to Hammarskjoeld, was failure of Chamoun to make clear what assistance he needed and also his apparent reluctance to apply force ruthlessly to suppress the revolt. Hammarskjoeld also said his observers, though free to move about, had not so far come upon any definite evidence of infiltration or gun running.

2. Dixon confirmed my impression that the United Kingdom and United States are "pretty well committed" to provide military assistance to Chamoun if he requests it, although they have imposed the condition that they would operate through the United Nations. This would mean in practice an appeal to the Security Council which would be prevented from reaching a decision by the Soviet veto. The next logical step in United Nations terms would be an extraordinary session of the General Assembly with a view to deciding to send a United Nations emergency force on the Suez pattern. However, this would take so long, said Dixon, and might encounter such difficulties, that the United Kingdom and the United States might decide that, the futility of the Security Council having been demonstrated they would go ahead outside the United Nations and provide a force to protect Lebanon.

3. Dixon said Hammarskjoeld had warned that the United Kingdom and United States would burn their fingers over this. Dixon also said the Canadians have been frightfully worried over possible developments. (Our own contacts with the Canadians confirm this, though they have indicated that they are somewhat less worried now than last week). The operation had now become a N.A.T.O. one. Spaak was on our side but the problem was to convince the Scandinavians and other Europeans and particularly Canada.

SECRET

258

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

SECRET

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

4. Admittedly this would be an exercise in "brinkmanship" and would entail certain risks but Dixon did not think the Soviet would react militarily. It was important to save Lebanon because what was involved was not so much the future of Lebanon as the independence of Iraq and the Baghdad Pact. There was close co-operation and understanding between London and Washington and Dixon could not resist a certain satisfaction at the thought that the United States might find itself co-operating with the United Kingdom in a military action similar to that which it had condemned in the United Nations at the time of Suez.

5. Of course, owing to Chamoun's weakness the situation in which the United Kingdom and United States would be ready to use force may not develop. Dixon remarked on the possibility that Chamoun will soon be replaced by a newly elected President who will hold the situation for a few months but then perhaps move to enter the U.A.R. towards the end of the year.

6. I assume that you have been more fully informed by the United Kingdom on their thinking than at the time of Suez and havebeen giving consideration to the problems that will confront Australia if there is

(a) A proposal for a United Nations emergency force and

(b) An independent armed action by United Kingdom and United States without United Nations endorsement. I confess I have some apprehensions that the United Kingdom may again overestimate the degree of United States support for such action and underestimate the reaction of world public opinion and particularly the effects upon her position in Asia. While expecting that in such an event we would support the United Kingdom action, I would also expect this to have adverse effects upon our own position with Asian members of the United Nations. I would be glad to have some indication of your thinking.

x

MIN. & DEPT. E.A.
P.M'S.

28th June, 1958

x amendment.

SECRET

259

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

SECRET

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

Amended Copy

I.10868/9/70

Sent: 27th June, 1958
1420
Rec'd: 28th June, 1958
1152

BD

Transmitted via leased channel

FROM:

Australian Mission to the United Nations,
NEW YORK.

NY485. SECRET PRIORITY.

From Walker.

Lebanon.

Dixon, who had just seen Hammarskjold on his return from Lebanon told me at dinner at my place last night that Hammarskjold apparently believed he had reached some sort of standstill agreement with Nasser for the next week or so, with which Chamoun also seemed to have agreed. (However, there were reports that Chamoun, in view of worsening x of situation was now actively seeking increased assistance from United Nations). One difficulty, according to Hammarskjold, was failure of Chamoun to make clear what assistance he needed and also his apparent reluctance to apply force ruthlessly to suppress the revolt. Hammarskjold also said his observers, though free to move about, had not so far come upon any definite evidence of infiltration or gun running.

2. Dixon confirmed my impression that the United Kingdom and United States are "pretty well committed" to provide military assistance to Chamoun if he requests it, although they have imposed the condition that they would operate through the United Nations. This would mean in practice an appeal to the Security Council which would be prevented from reaching a decision by the Soviet veto. The next logical step in United Nations terms would be an extraordinary session of the General Assembly with a view to deciding to send a United Nations emergency force on the Suez pattern. However, this would take so long, said Dixon, and might encounter such difficulties, that the United Kingdom and the United States might decide that, the futility of the Security Council having been demonstrated they would go ahead outside the United Nations and provide a force to protect Lebanon.

3. Dixon said Hammarskjold had warned that the United Kingdom and United States would burn their fingers over this. Dixon also said the Canadians have been frightfully worried over possible developments. (Our own contacts with the Canadians confirm this, though they have indicated that they are somewhat less worried now than last week). The operation had now become a N.A.T.O. one. Spaak was on our side but the problem was to convince the Scandinavians and other Europeans and particularly Canada.

SECRET

SECRET

260

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS.

To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA.

Despatched:

Received:

Establishment of Force would mean that President Chamoun would have to authorise it to fire on Lebanese citizens. It would also require previous finding of aggression or threat of aggression for which it was unlikely that majority necessary for approval in Security Council or assembly could be obtained. Even if resolution of this kind could be carried it would in Secretary General's view probably prove impossible to operate.

5. Nor was Secretary General in favour of building up present Observer Corps. Any such forward move would, he thought, upset delicate balance which he hoped his visit to area had established.

6. United Kingdom representative made it plain that we regarded situation in Lebanon as serious and thought that United Nations must be prepared to take more vigorous action if present arrangements did not prove effective.

7. (Canberra and Wellington only). Please inform Mr. Menzies or Mr. Casey/Mr. Nash stressing the secrecy of this information.

8. (All other posts) Foregoing is for your own strictly secret background information only.

SECRET

SECRET

261
GY.

TELEGRAM

From: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS.
To: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANBERRA.

Despatched: 21.45 hours 27th June, 1958
Received: 11.20 hours 28th June, 1958.

IMMEDIATE

SECRET

No. W.467

Addressed Canberra,
Wellington,
Repeated Other posts.

My W.460.

LEBANON.

United Kingdom representative in New York saw United Nations Secretary General on 26th June.

2. Secretary General, while not denying that there has been collusion between Lebanese opposition and elements in U.A.R., thought it difficult to be sure from how far up chain of command in Damascus and Cairo this has been organised. He thought good deal of military material had been passed into Lebanon during period of Arab League meeting in Benghazi but that scale had been smaller before and since. In his view neither government nor rebels in Lebanon wished to take any irrevocable step. He was critical of President Chamoun's attitude on question of political compromise and of Lebanese Government's failure to produce satisfactory evidence of U.A.R. interference. Observers were in consequence having difficulty in producing a report which would not give false impression. It was planned to issue report next week.

3. Secretary General said that as result of his discussions with Nasser he had been able to tell President Chamoun that he felt confident that pressure from U.A.R. would now be relaxed. Secretary General indicated that he was sure that situation in Lebanon would achieve equilibrium if U.A.R. interference ceased.

4. Secretary General thought it would be politically almost impossible to secure establishment of United Nations force.

/Establishment

SECRET

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

GUARD SECRET

I.10876/7

it is only an impression that the Cabinet while accepting most of the Department's estimate does not accept it all.

Crocker.

29th June, 1958.

MIN & DEPT E.A.
MIN & DEPT DEFENCE
P.M.'S.

SECRET

263

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

INWARD CABLEGRAM.

SECRET

GUARD

58/5474

30 JUN 1958

:FPG

I.10876/7

Dated: 27th June, 1958
1955

Rec'd: 28th June, 1958
1457

FROM: (transmitted via leased channel)

Australian High Commission,
OTTAWA

204. SECRET AND GUARD

Repeated Washington OTWA 328.

Lebanon.

The following summarizes the Canadian Department's estimate as given to me today by Watkins and Campbell (Head of Middle East Division).

2. The worst of what promised to be a dangerous crisis is, thanks to Hammarskjoeld's initiative, now probably but not indubitably over. This took the wind out of the sails of the would-be interventionists. His report will probably be issued by or after the middle of next week and if possible in such a form as to obviate the need for bringing the matter befre the Security Council.

3. As far as Washington is concerned, the policy of intervention seems to have been almost exclusively personal to Dulles and was opposed not only by officials in the State Department but by the Pentagon. Hanson Baldwin's article in the "New York Times" yesterday is significant as regards the attitude of the last. Dulles might also get into trouble with Congress over his blank cheque to Chamoun as the executive would seem to be exceeding its authority in giving such commitments.

4. Dulles' flirtation with the notion of getting an armed intervention in Lebanon through Iraq-Jordan was unrealistic and dangerous.

5. Malik who is well known to be a controversial figure and a stooge without any party or standing of his own in Lebanon over-played his hand so much that his reputation is bound to suffer both in Washington and in United Nations quarters as it deserves to.

6. Allegations about Isreaeli efforts to entangle Washington were repeated. Also allegations about similar Turkish efforts.

7. The Canadian estimate is now more severe against Dulles than against the British Government, though it is severe on it too. According to the Canadians the latter saw earlier the case against armed intervention and its motives were not the same as the motives of Dulles. His concern was to salvage the only Regime which would stand by the Eisenhower doctrine in the only country which had accepted that doctrine.

8. I have the impression though I must emphasize that

SECRET

264

TOP SECRET

GU:JS

THE PRIME MINISTER:

On 15th May Pritchard passed to you a message addressed to you from Mr. Macmillan. The message described the first approach of the present crisis by President Chamoun of the Lebanon and traversed quite fully the possibility of western intervention. The External Affairs people now wish to send the text of the message to Mr. Beale.

Although the message was not specifically marked personal and although it is now well out dated (United Kingdom attitude having changed three or four times since then) my instinct is against advising Mr. Beale.

Perhaps you would decide what is to be done.

....

30th June, 1958.

TOP SECRET

265

PRIME MINISTER'S DEPARTMENT.

TOP SECRET

58/5474
30 SEP 1958

THE PRIME MINISTER:

On 15th May Pritchard passed to you a message addressed to you from Mr. Macmillan. The message described the first approach of the present crisis by President Chamoun of the Lebanon and traversed quite fully the possibility of western intervention. The External Affairs people now wish to send the text of the message to Mr. Beale.

Although the message was not specifically marked personal and although it is now well out-dated (United Kingdom attitude having changed three or four times since then) my instinct is against advising Mr. Beale.

Perhaps you would decide what is to be done.

Returned from P.M.s Office 30 Sept.

E. J. Bunting

30th June, 1958.

P/A

TOP SECRET

DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND TRADE

STATEMENT OF REASONS UNDER SECTION 40 OF THE ARCHIVES ACT 1983

CRS: A1209 ITEM: 1958/5474 pt 1

TITLE: Lebanon situation reports 1958

DECISION: The folios listed below are wholly/partially exempt under sub-sections 33(1)(a) and (b) of the Archives Act 1983

222 - 223

FACTS ON WHICH THIS DECISION IS BASED:

The exempted folio/s contain/s :

- information provided in confidence by a foreign government, the disclosure of which would constitute a breach of that confidence.

- information communicated to the Australian Government by a foreign government in strict confidence. Such information is still afforded security protection in the originating country.

- information the release of which could cause damage to the security of the Commonwealth

REASONS FOR THE DECISION:

Section 33(1)(a) of the Archives Act 1983 states that a record is exempt if it contains information or matter the disclosure of which under this Act could reasonably be expected to cause damage to the security, defence or international relations of the Commonwealth.

The foreign government has asked that the information receive continuing protection. Release could reasonably be expected to cause damage to Australia's international relations.

Section 33(1)(b) of the Archives Act states that a record is exempt if it contains information or matter communicated in confidence by or on behalf of a foreign government, an authority of a foreign government or an international organisation to the Government of the Commonwealth, to an authority of the Commonwealth or to a person receiving the communication on behalf of the Commonwealth or of an authority of the Commonwealth, being information or matter the disclosure of which under this Act would constitute a breach of that confidence.

International relations are dependent upon the adequate flow of information between one country and another. If disclosure would lessen the confidence of another country in the Government of Australia, that is sufficient ground for a finding that disclosure could reasonably be expected to damage international relations.

DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND TRADE

STATEMENT OF REASONS UNDER SECTION 40 OF THE ARCHIVES ACT 1983

CRS: A1209/ 80 **ITEM:** 1958/5474

TITLE: Lebanon situation reports

DECISION: The folios listed below are wholly/partially exempt under sub-sections 33(1)(a) and (b) of the Archives Act 1983

43-44, 46-47, 49-50, 51, 56

FACTS ON WHICH THIS DECISION IS BASED:

The exempted folios contain :

✓ - information provided in confidence by a foreign government, the disclosure of which would constitute a breach of that confidence.

- the identity of an overseas intelligence agency/agent. The country concerned has requested that the Australian Government not release this identity in this context.

✓ - intelligence/information the release of which could cause damage to : the security of the Commonwealth/international ✓ relations

REASONS FOR THE DECISION:

Section 33(1)(a) of the Archives Act 1983 states that a record is exempt if it contains information or matter the disclosure of which under this Act could reasonably be expected to cause damage to the security, defence or international relations of the Commonwealth.

The foreign government has asked that the information receive continuing protection. Release could reasonably be expected to cause damage to Australia's international relations.

Section 33(1)(b) of the Archives Act states that a record is exempt if it contains information or matter communicated in confidence by or on behalf of a foreign government, an authority of a foreign government or an international organisation to the Government of the Commonwealth, to an authority of the Commonwealth or to a person receiving the communication on behalf of the Commonwealth or of an authority of the Commonwealth, being information or matter the disclosure of which under this Act would constitute a breach of that confidence.

International relations are dependent upon the adequate flow of information between one country and another. If disclosure would lessen the confidence of another country in the Government of Australia, that is sufficient ground for a finding that disclosure could reasonably be expected to damage international relations.

NAS 277
June 1990

Australian Archives

DOCUMENT REMOVAL ADVICE

Folio/s numbered 43-44, 46-47, 49-50, 51, 56, 222-223 has/have been removed from this item.

Series/Accession No.: A1209/80 Item No.: 1958/5474 pt 1.

Document description: Lebanon situation reports 1958

Reason for removal: 33(1)(a)(b) & withheld pending agency advice

A copy/expunged copy has been inserted in place of folio/s 222-223

Number of folios removed: 10

Removed documents now controlled as:

Removed by: M.A. Della Lodolfo Position No. 30067 Date ~~1 July 1994~~ 23/3/95

1. Item copy

SUBJECT. LEBANON
SITUATION REPORTS
1958

RELATED PAPERS.

Folio No.	Referred to.	Clearing Officer's Initials.	Date Cleared.	Folio No.	Referred to.	Clearing Officer's Initials.	Date Cleared.	Folio No.	Referred to.	Clearing Officer's Initials.	Date Cleared.
	P/A	[illegible]	16/5								

By Authority: A. J. Arthur, C'wealth Govt. Printer, Canberra.

FILE NO. 58/5474

PART NO. 1

DISPOSAL CATEGORY.

RETAIN PERMANENTLY

DISPOSAL AUTHORITY S-446 | DISPOSAL CLASS 14-1-1

PRIME MINISTER'S DEPARTMENT.

TOP SECRET

TO BE PASSED BY HAND